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JAMES HATFIELD

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BEAUTY OF BUTTERMERE

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JAMES HATFIELD

AND THE

BEAUTY OF BUTTERMERE:

A Storp of Modern Cimes.

WITH ILLUSTRATIONS.

BY ROBERT CRUIKSHANK.

"I have great comfort from this fellow: methinks he hath no drowning mark upon him: his complexion is perfect gallows! Stand fast, good fate, to his hanging! Make the rope of his destiny our cable, for our own doth little advantage."—TEMPEST.

IN THREE VOLUMES.

VOL. I.

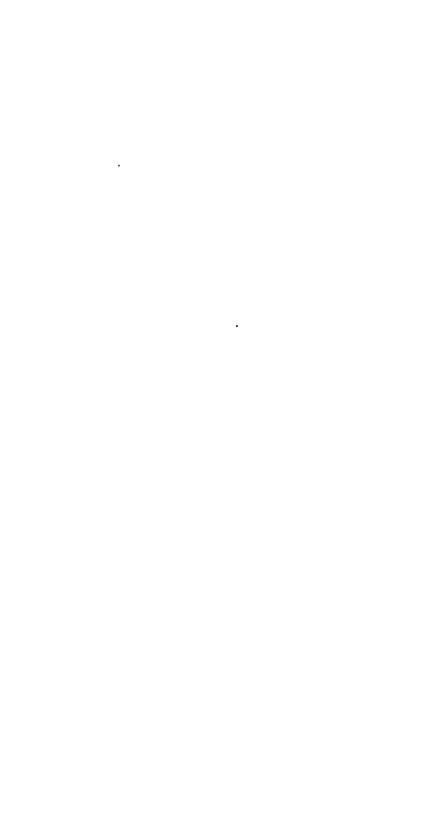
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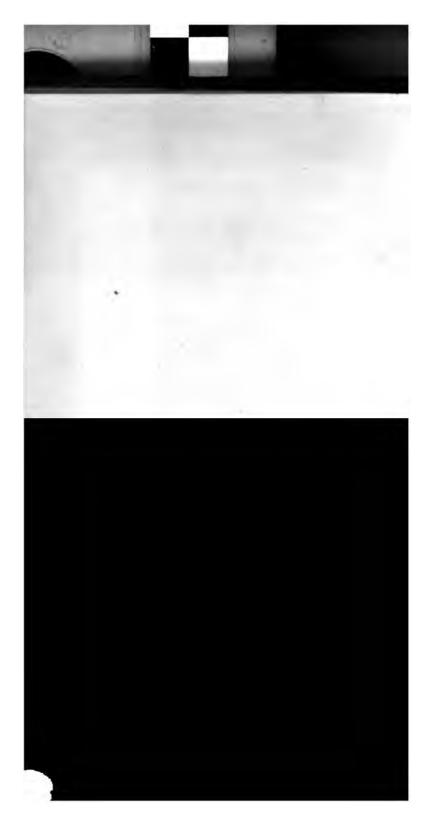
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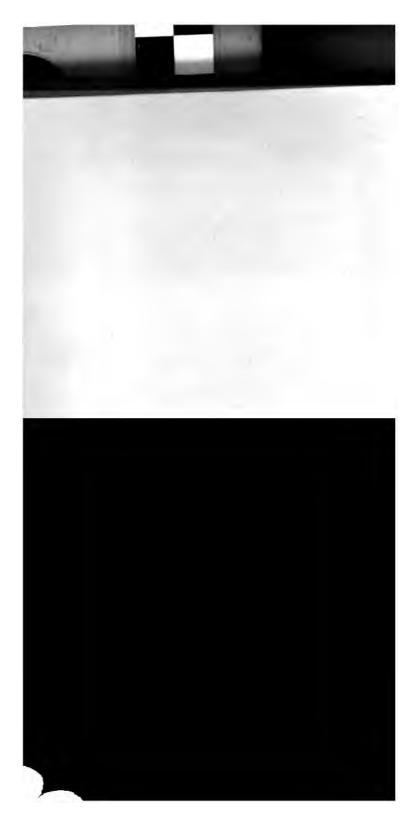
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JAMES HATFIELD

AND THE

BEAUTY OF BUTTERMERE.

VOL. I.



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ADVERTISEMENT

The singular being to whom the following

station in life, having been indebted for no mean education to a curate in the neighbourhood. As regards her personal recommendations in particular, she seems to have been as much an object of curiosity as was our adventurer, on his part, for polite imposture and accomplished scoundrelism. The names of Hatfield and "the Beauty of Buttermere," as she was called, were in the mouths of every one; and the humble but picturesque haunts of Buttermere became another, though a ruder Clarens for the time—which was the earlier part of the present century; and endless was the throng of visitants who crowded thither.

The circumstances of the actual story have been recorded without any greater licence in deviating from their exactness, than such as may fairly be conceded to the colouring of romance. In approaching, however, the scenes in which the events took place, another and a different source of interest presents itself. When we call to mind that those scenes have aided the inspiration of a Coleridge, a Wordsworth, and a Southey, we feel that we are treading on classic ground.

The first mentioned of these names possesses indeed an increased claim to our interest, since it

ILLUSTRATIONS.

VOL. L

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VOL. II.

ADVENTURES

OF

JAMES HATFIELD.

CHAPTER I.

"Follow, follow me!

In the depth of those beloved eyes
Still saw I, 'Follow me!'"

SHELLEY'S PROMETHEUS.

The golden glow of sunset had mellowed in its lustre the yellow mosses of the Melbreak* ridge, and the orb was sinking beneath the height, when through its haze of glory was discerned a form bright as any vision which such a scene might have inspired in those gifted denizens of this lovely clime—a Wordsworth, a Coleridge, or a Southey. In the fulness of joy had the smiling year arrayed the scene and season. In the fulness of joy, too, had the summer light of youth arrayed the brow and illumined the heart of the fair being who now shewed herself, shrined as it were in

^{*} Heights overlooking Buttermere to the westward.

the ruddy sunlight, on the brow of the hill. To witness her as she stood circled in the full lustre of that halo, she seemed as some beatified form lit up in the inspiration of a Raphael's pencil.

A youthful stranger, who was on his rambles through that wild and interesting region, had, in contemplating the features of the scene, found his glance attracted towards this object of loveliness above all others, even amidst a realm where the beauty and magnificence of nature abound. And, as the Houri charm sheds new enchantment over the blooming haunts of Eden, so this radiant figure centered in herself, for the present, the attractions of the spot; and well may we pause with the stranger to regard for a moment and admire the "lovely vision," as we had almost been inclined to term her.

She was of a figure where lightness and native grace were combined with all the activity and vigour that health and constant exercise impart. No languid delicacy of hue pined on her gladsome and beauteous, but sun-burnt cheek, the healthful bloom of which had enamoured the day-beam (to cite the fable) so much, that it had left the mark of its kisses there. The graceful loftiness of her neck made her appear rather taller than she really was. Her stature was not much above the middle height, and her small feet seemed to touch the earth as lightly

tion and elude him. The disquiet with which he saw the purple-coloured hood she wore, floating in the breeze, vanish, as she lightly tripped round the hill brow, may be well imagined. He immediately hastened to pursue her track from the foot of the slope where he had surveyed her; but after having toiled up the steep, he saw her at the further end of a long valley below, followed now by the kine which she had called together with the horn that he had just heard, and which he now remembered was not confined to Switzerland, but was common also in the mountains of Connemara in Ireland, and other mountainous districts.

He was for awhile overwhelmed with impatience and vexation at having thus lost this lovely "herd-mistress," (for such he took her to be,) and stood watching her track as it wound along the base of the ridge on which he stood, and which spread onward till it overhung the waters of Buttermere. The rude notes of the horn had challenged the herd to the hour of milking, as the day-beam had now waned, and the evening star—that Venus which might have served for an emblem of her own beauty—shone over her rustic but blissful task, and smiled on her as the divinest object it looked on.

At least, so thought the person who now stood watching her track, while, seeing that it wound in a direction towards the lake and at the back of the ridge whence he looked, he began to entertain hopes that he might yet meet the object of his admiration. Nor was he disappointed, for on arriving at the bottom of the height, in the direction facing the lake, he beheld her now close at hand advancing at the head of the obedient herd. No form of rural loveliness that ever saw its beauties reflected in the pure Arethusan fountains it bent over was ever more beautiful. Never did Doric reed celebrate in its love-notes a sweeter theme for its rustic modulations.

She wore, beneath the mantle or short cloak already described, a bodice of the old Lincoln green colour, surmounted by a pink kerchief over her bosom. Her small fairy feet were shielded from the "rude flint" of the crag by a sort of short compact buskins, worn with the hair outside; and these, with a blue kirtle, completed a costume which no maiden of Saxony or the Swiss mountains might have disdained. This gear, though homely, was marked by neatness, and that grace which everything acquired on a form of so much lightness and movements so airy. They gave all she wore a better appearance than it possessed in itself; and not all the fictitious graces that art, that modes the most studied, or invention the most curious could dictate, would have added lustre to, or enhanced the charm in which nature, unadorned nature, had arrayed her.

CHAPTER II.

"The first mild touch of sympathy and thought."
WORDSWORTH.

"My beautiful creature," exclaimed the stranger as he approached her, "would you direct me the way to the village? for I have lost my path in rambling about these wilds, and account myself happy in having found one who I think can set me right. I am sure," he added to himself, "I could follow her guidance wherever she led me!"

In saying these words, the stranger arrived at the bottom of the hill, and stood close before the lovely object he had addressed, greeting her at the same time with a graceful inclination of the head, as he raised the travelling cap he wore from his brow. A certain excusable interest, no less than graceful deference, might have been detected as characterizing his inquiry, and shewed that the admiration he had conceived for this charming-





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mountain-maiden was as much expressed in his address, as any alleged desire of gaining the information he asked of her.

On her part, she knew not, at first, whether the air of distinction which characterized him, or the manly graces of his figure and handsome speaking countenance, possessed the worthiest claim on her attention. She did not, as is the case with many of her class in life, form her estimate of his right to her respect by his dress, which was of the plainest description, consisting of the travelling cap just mentioned as doffed in honour of herself, a riding coat of rough blue cloth, a plaid waistcoat, and trowsers of brown duck, coming down low over the instep of a pair of short-ancle boots, well calculated, from their thickness, for clambering over the rocky heights over which his rambles extended; indeed, a Cumberland peat-cutter or Flemish boor with his sabots might have viewed them with pardonable jealousy.

It is reasonable to suppose that the stranger's manner, engaging and deferential as we have described it, did not fail in tacitly interesting the fair mountaineer, who insensibly felt flattered by it as a compliment which she could not help being conscious was paid to the power of her charms. Independently of this, there was something so different in the style of address she now

experienced, to that she had been hitherto accustomed to meet from any of those rustic admirers who might have uttered their rude compliments to her, that the "novelty" of the stranger's manner had no less effect in engaging her attention than any grace or distinction that marked it. In fact, she was at present addressed by one who to the polite air of the man of the world combined a complete (and possibly dangerous) understanding of the female character; and knew well how to flatter insensibly its worthy self-love, and sway its affections, too, in that marked respect and deference, tempered by a certain tenderness, which we have witnessed in him. Address, air, manner, they speak more than all the power of utterance or eloquence in the world.

And so the lovely mountain-maiden might have felt; yet notwithstanding the air of command which belonged naturally to him, notwithstanding, too, the habitual disguise of his thoughts and feelings,—he was unable, altogether, to conceal on the present occasion a certain degree of embarrassment, betrayed both in his countenance and utterance, and which may well be excused as the effect of those charms which had so powerfully, no less than suddenly, assailed him. This embarrassment did not detract, indeed, in the estimation of the fair herd-mistress from any interest inspired by his

address; on the contrary, it might have increased it, since it had the effect of betraying to her the secret of the influence her charms possessed over him. In effecting this, it restored to her, in no small degree, her confidence, and a certain becoming archness, which was not the least striking feature of interest in her manner, and which she had at first felt a little shaken by the awe with which the superior bearing of the stranger had impressed her. In fact, she was rendered sensible, to use the expression with which her rustic friends would have supplied her, "that the gentleman was as much afraid of her as she of him;" or, in other words, that he stood no less in awe of her charms than she on her part could feel with respect to either his air of command or distinction of bearing. Accordingly, as the blush that like a transient gleam of light had played over her sunny cheek faded away, she raised her eyes, which had been for a moment cast down, on his countenance, as she archly made answer, with a smile, while the laughing graces of her reply rendered her yet more bewitching in his eyes-

"You must, indeed, Sir, be at a loss to find your way! since you cannot discover it while even the waters of the meer, on whose brink the village stands, shew themselves through the break of yonder ridge. Nay, the tower of the church can be seen

from the spot you were standing on a moment past; and the road winds down to the village from the height,—see, Sir," (and here she pointed it out,) "shewing itself, and kindly saving a stranger the trouble of making inquiries as to its direction! Not to discover a way so plain, shews indeed, Sir, you must have been at a loss."

She was right, perhaps, in the exercise of her irony; for, in good truth, the stranger himself would have confessed that if he had not lost his way, he would have been glad to say that he had, as an excuse for opening a conversation with the object of his admiration. He replied, smiling in turn, as he fell into the track she took, and walked by her side, "Indeed, I must have been dull or blind, I suppose! but, however, I esteem myself happy in my want of perception, since it has thrown me on your guidance. In truth, you may make some excuse for me, for after I had seen yourself, I had no eyes for any other object,—no thought for the pursuit of any other track than that which you follow!"

These words indeed evinced that all disguise of the interest with which she had inspired him was now willingly thrown aside. She laughed, however, as if not heeding the compliment, though the blush that again kindled in her cheek bespoke she was not altogether insensible of it, while she an "humble village girl," as she had herself expressed, yet she was neither without her pride nor possibly her reasons for keeping it in view. "You know not," continued the stranger, while he proceeded in a more serious tone than before, and with a significance that occasioned her to turn her eyes on his face with something like a look of inquiry. "You don't know what a person may be, or what his condition or circumstances, by his mere outward appearance."

"We cannot know people on a first acquaintance you should rather say, Sir," (tempering her former archness with a somewhat graver air also;) "for humble person as I am, you are not the first gentleman out of the many I have seen as visitants to these lakes, and therefore I cannot mistake you for any other than you are."

The stranger involuntarily bowed his head, and was silent a moment; and something like a sigh escaped him as he continued—

"The world, circumstances, the misfortunes of many, the adventure of some, often occasion people variously to assume shapes and characters that do not belong to them. The poor man, for instance, though of superior mind and feelings, is obliged to play a part and appear of better condition than he is, in order to gain respect from the world and worldlings; while the rich man, on the other hand,

is often disguised under the meaner array of seeming poverty. So again the man of genius, more
really wealthy in his mental store than the paltry
minion whose worldly parade is his only claim to
respectability, is often disregarded and despised
from the humility of his appearance. The knave,
the swindler, the man who lives by dishonest acts,"
(and here his voice was raised and his manner became more impassioned,) "often, meantime, bears
about him the appearance of distinction, and imposes on the world he perhaps despises and secretly
rejoices in making his dupe!"

"Yes, Sir, all this is no doubt true," she replied,
"and in your placing before me the arts by which
some men disguise their characters, you confirm me
in the opinion you led me to express,—excuse me,
Sir,—of yourself, as regards appearances; for no
one but a gentleman surely could express himself
or think and feel as you have suggested. Therefore, Sir, though you might choose to entertain
yourself by the compliments you paid me a moment ago, be assured they do not blind me to the
sense of my own situation, and the distance that
exists between—"

"What a clever, delightful creature she is !"
interrupted the stranger to himself, surprised at
finding so much propriety of sentiment and superiority of expression in an humble village girl.

"You have a good school, I suppose, in the village?" he asked.

"No, there is none. There is one at Keswick, which is not far off."

"You have had the benefit of some education? Assuredly you must! Did you go to Keswick?"

"No! I am indebted for my education (a better one, I think, than I should have gained, perhaps, at a village school) to a clergyman of the neighbouring parish of Lorton, where he still resides, and where I was for some time brought up when a child."

"The parish of Lorton!" said the stranger, with an interest he was unable to suppress. "What is the clergyman's name?—is he a curate?—had he any child?" were the questions he asked hurriedly.

She gazed on him now with surprise, as she answered his questions as briefly as his anxiety seemed to demand.

"He had no children that I remember,—yes, I believe he had a son; but he died abroad. He is a curate, and poor."...

. . . " But his name?-his name?" . . .

"Fenton."

"Good God!" exclaimed the stranger, and was nearly sinking back, so much so that, had he not supported himself by a rude mountain-ash bough that protruded itself from the bankside, he would, in all probability, have fallen. He soon, however, came to himself, and resumed his self-possession, as he replied to her inquiry "whether he knew Mr. Fenton?"

"No, no,—that is,—I have heard of him. A good man, and struggling, as I have been informed, with difficulties."

"He is, indeed, a good man. I do not speak from his kindness to myself alone! He was ever the father of the unfortunate, the destitute, in his parish; or, I may say, the whole country round. His means would not afford him the power of doing much; but he ever shared his little—he ever broke his crust'—with the sufferer that asked aid of him."

"Ill recompensed as excellent being! I knew—that is, I mean," replied the stranger, evading the conclusion to which his first words promised to lead, "I mean to say," he continued, half speaking to himself, and half to her, "that the instance of Mr. Fenton is a melancholy illustration of the unworthy recompence with which so many of our more exemplary workers in his vocation are visited! . . . But we are now near the village; it is close, I see, at hand," he added abruptly to his fair comrade.

She had been insensibly so much engrossed by the interest awakened in her mind from the circumstance of her early friend and educator, Mr. Fenton, being known (as it should appear) to the stranger, that she had involuntarily permitted herself to continue in the same path with him, without considering about the observation that might possibly be drawn upon her in consequence of being seen walking side by side with a gentleman into the village. She therefore took advantage of a turning which led by a rather more circuitous track than the one before them into the village, and telling the stranger that "this was her way, while his own he could not mistake," she bade him good evening, and was preparing to leave him, when he said—

"What! will you not let me accompany you into the village? I had many things to ask you about the spot."

"Of all those, Sir, you will be able to gain information on your arrival there.... So come, Fan! come, Rossette!" she exclaimed, calling to her truant cattle, as she again proceeded to turn away.

"But can you not," continued her interrogator, wishing to detain her, "can you not recommend me to any inn where I can be accommodated?"

"None in particular, Sir. The few that there are, are all equally humble."

"But I think I have heard of one near the border of the lake, where the celebrated Beauty of Buttermere is to be seen,—eh? though, indeed, I he was at length roused, it was at the thought of her mention of "the good Mr. Fenton," as he was deservedly designated throughout the neighbourhood.

The spell of her beauty at once vanished (for a time at least) from his senses at this thought. It seemed as though the lash of the furies had stung him to the heart as he started and proceeded forward with unequal pace, now hurried and now more slow, betokening the agitation of his mind, while "a change" had come over his countenance as darkly as over "the spirit of his dream."

CHAPTER III.

"You are well overtaken! I shall, by your favour, bear you company as far as Theobalds." IZAAK WALTON.

THE reflections that agitated the stranger we shall, by and by, have an opportunity of expressing; at present they were momentarily suspended by his finding himself now at the entrance of the village, and he stood awhile hesitating to pass its threshold, as it were unable to make up his mind to finish his ramble, so beautiful was the evening, and inviting him in its calm persuasion to linger abroad a short time longer ere he housed him for the night. The reflection of the sunset glow shed its burning lustre over the meer, and lit it up in one broad sheet of ruddy gold, putting him in mind of the " red gold" that glitters in our old ballads, so gorgeously was it arrayed in its wide mantle of crimson. At length he turned listlessly round, and wandered slowly down to the water's edge, pursuing his stroll along the bank, and seeming for an interval beguiled of his bitterer thoughts, and deriving pleasure from a contemplation of the beauty of the scenery and the loveliness and repose of the lake, which, slumbering as it did amidst the wild and craggy grandeur of the heights that form its barrier, well illustrated Byron's picture of "Beauty lying in the lap of Terror."

... "What scenes of happiness," he thought to himself, "exist, if our minds and feelings were not so warped by circumstances as to render us unable to enjoy them—nay, force us to feel that those scenes in their very cheerfulness do but mock us. To me my life appears one hideous dream, whose fears I scarce dare relate to the solitude here around me!—hunted, pursued from the haunts of men under a fatal charge,—'frighted' almost at my own shadow, in my too just surmises that the myrmidons of 'doom' are waylaying me,—compelled to exist under one perpetual disguise!" . . .

He paused a moment, and sat down by a rock that bowed over the water, and looked on that tranquil wave and scene with a mingled sense of admiration at their beauties, and regret that it was forbidden him to share the repose to which they invited. He was not insensible of the mild influence of the soft air as it came on gentle pinions float-

of security; for to this spot-to the remembrances of my childhood-I am coerced-urged by a sort of fate-it may be, a fatality! I might have escaped to a foreign shore,-I might have sailed for America, or to the French coast; but some destiny for good or for evil whispered to me, and irresistibly, to come hither!" And his thoughts now recurring to the subject of Fenton and the character the fair herd-mistress had given of him, he exclaimed, "He is then the same kind and indulgent ' friend and father' of all around him that he ever was. . . . I vearn to go to him-to ask his forgiveness for the wrong of an earlier day, to own to him that I am No! no! Gracious God, no! Why should I contaminate his fair name with the impurity, the disgrace, that attaches to my own-at least, the name that, erewhile, passed for my own. I cannot! I must not! If I could be sure of escape-of security from detection-of freedomwhy then I might gratify such an inclination. Eventually I might; but at present, I fear it is impossible! Impossible!" he repeated the word aloud in a sort of mental agony, where all struggle of doubt seemed despairingly overcome by the painful prospect of some doom, the contemplation of which at once excited his anguish, remorse, and shame; and which he might attempt indeed to evade, yet with but precarious hopes of success.

Scarcely had the sound escaped his lips before

he was startled by a footstep, and looking round he perceived a person with a fishing-rod and landingnet, and other implements of angling, coming towards him, followed by a liver-coloured waterspaniel, which he called Bryan. Any one who had seen the stranger's face a moment before, and had witnessed the deep and passionate workings of anguish, shame, and alarm portrayed in it, would scarcely have believed they beheld the same person when they saw the appearance of serenity that now again took possession of his countenance as he looked up in the face of the angler who approached him, and, while he maintained his seat on the rock, answered the other's salutation with an inclination of the head and a smile. In fact, suspicion was baffled in his presence by that calmness and mingled dignity, that cheerful and easy frankness of manner, which he habitually wore, and which, if it had not even been natural to him, (which it was in an eminent degree,) would have been rendered a second nature by that vigilant exercise of it, which was no less expedient to throw suspicion off its guard, than it was agreeable to all who were brought in contact with him. To look at the stranger, and imagine from his appearance, address, and bearing, that he was capable of a dishonourable or guilty action was impossible.

"A lovely evening this for fishing," he said,

" and I dare say you have had a good day's sport, though I should think the water a little too clear just here for the trout to rise readily at the fly."

The angler was pleased to find from this remark that he had fallen in (as he imagined) with one who appeared initiated in the mysteries of the angle, of which he was himself a devoted professor. He was no light, romantic stripling visiting these wilds with the accompaniment of his angle rod; on the contrary, his appearance indicated that he was past the middle age considerably, and his figure and bearing were rather calculated to inspire a feeling of drollery than any other sensation. He was, in a word, of a short, pursy stature, and waddled in his gait, or rather "jolted" forward, (it may be said,) the rotundity of figure he bore in front well illustrating what Homer calls in the Odyssey, " capacious caverns" in the corpulency of his goodly person. He panted like a decoy-fowler's spaniel of the fens (or his own trusty Bryan beside him), fighting his way through the stiff sedge and weeds of the bank as he drives the ducks before him. Our angler's stumpy legs and rotund figure gained an additional clumsiness of appearance from the short small-clothes and tight gaiters which exhibited in exact symmetry those substantial "logs" which he called "legs." The little bulk of his upper man was as closely incased as

the lower, and becomingly set off in a short velveteen shooting-jacket, which, when flung open. exhibited, as if in emulation of the ruddy orb itself of day, the crimson rotundity of his waistcoat bulging over a person that forced it out to its full tension. To regard it, you would imagine it must burst asunder; but this consequence was prevented by the proud resistance of a row of sugar-loaf gilt and chased buttons, which, glowing over this capacious eminence of crimson, arrayed it in additional lustre. A coloured kerchief girt the throat of the little Doctor, (so was he called, having taken out a Scotch diploma of " M.D.,") and with a straw broad-brimmed hat on his head, thus arrayed and accoutred, he used to sally forth on his favourite excursion of angling, his range being between Crumnock, Buttermere, and Keswick, which last place was his head-quarters.

The portrait of Dr. Esdaile (such was his name) would be scarcely complete without a sketch of his countenance in addition. This, at a general view, you would pronounce very much like a large, swelling and steaming, round plum-pudding; for the honest ruddy brown of its ground, and the freckles that spangled it, made it look for all the world just like the above-mentioned joyous Christmas fare, studded with its countless plums. Add to this, a little snub nose, dabbed like an effigy of

putty upon the face, a pair of scanty red whiskers, and good-humoured, small, light blue eyes, and you have the Doctor before you to the very life.

Such was the appearance of this medical and piscatorial oddity; yet there was no one who, after conversing with him, did not like him, and feel sensible of the influence of that good-humour which his countenance promised, and his cheerfulness of manner subsequently confirmed.

"You say truly," he replied to the stranger's remark; "the water is much too clear just here; and nothing but a net will ever secure a char or trout in this part of the meer."

"A char? What, then, this is the renowned prey you seek in this water? I did not know it was an inhabitant of this lake."

"Yes it is; but not so fine as in Coniston.*
Do not imagine, however, I have been wasting my time in trying to hook a fish in the meer itself,—no, no;—it is in yonder little stream+ that runs into it just at that creek, that I have been plying my angle, and with what success you shall judge."

So saying, Doctor Esdaile, while he placed his tackle down, and bid Bryan crouch down in the

^{*} In this lake the finest char are found: those of Ullswater are the lowest in repute. The waters also of Windermere, Wastwater, Crumnock, and Buttermere, contain them.

⁺ In this stream is the famous fall of Scale Force,

sedge by the side of it, deliberately wiped his brow with a capacious brown silk handkerchief, and seated himself on the bank near his new acquaintance.

This person at once found the way to his heart, by appearing to take a deep interest in the subject of the char, which now the Doctor proceeded to exhibit with all the pride felt by the captor and conqueror of so wily and difficult a prey. And we may here observe, that one of the arts of the stranger was to make all he fell in with pleased with him. " He glided," as Dryden says, " unfelt into their secret hearts." Like Alcibiades, (though in a more contracted sphere of action,) he adapted himself, with consummate address and natural ease, to all tastes, and was uniformly a favourite with all whom he had ever encountered-except, indeed, it need scarcely be added, those whom he had wronged,those few whom peril and necessity compelled him to avoid, (as we have been enabled at least to glean from the avowal that has been overheard to escape him,) in such retreats of security as that which he now hoped he had discovered.

Another art he possessed was that of discerning at a glance almost, the character of the person, whoever he might be, with whom he came in contact. Selfpreservation rendered such discrimination necessary, though, on the present occasion, he was glad to feel there was not much need of its exercise; for he was satisfied that there was little danger to be apprehended from the companionship of the good-humoured Doctor; and as he surveyed this worthy himself with a grin of satisfaction, in opening the perforated tin box which held the fish, in order to exhibit the trophies of his sport, he could not help regarding him with something like a smile of contempt,—it might be compassion,—to think that a being existed who appeared to have no care in the world beyond the anxiety of securing a good day's amusement with his angle rod!

"There!" said the Doctor, giving forth his whole soul in the monosyllable. "There!" he said, exultingly producing a splendid fish from the wet mosses that the box was inlaced with like a waterfowl's lair, dashed with the dews of the river that hurries past. "Now, just look!—that is a fish that will do your eyes good to dwell on!"

" A couple of pound weight at least?"

"Yes; and the char seldom exceed that in either the meer here, or the brook in which I have been fishing. But if you admire it as it looks in propriis naturalibus, which means undressed, and without any sauce but the dews of the brook on it, what will you say when you see it teeming and steaming invitingly before you in the savoury richness of sauces aiding its own flavour! It were a banquet for Epicurus! Imagine it, my dear Sir," exclaimed the

little Doctor, warming in his enthusiasm, and exhibiting to the stranger's amusement another trait in his character, namely, that of gastronome, in addition to that of angler, "Imagine it, I say, inviting the impatience of your palate to luxuriate in its richness—the rare combination—the mingled sweetness and delicacy of the fish, aided by the exciting piquancy of the sauce I hope to put to it. Oh! the palate tingles at the thought!" And the little convivialist was well nigh capering in ecstasy at the savoury images his gourmandise conjured up; while his companion could not suppress a laugh as he replied—

"Upon my word, you must excuse me for being a little surprised to hear you thus eloquent on a theme, no doubt very inviting, but not such as I had imagined the contemplations of anglers had usually embraced! I had fancied that all brothers of the angle were of the contemplative school, and confined their dreams to the philosophy and quiet self-commune which the genius of solitude inspired amidst the pensiveness and tranquillity of sequestered brooks and shadowy banks . . . where the hollow sound of falling waters, the hum of insects floating through the lambent lustre of azure air, or the tinkling of sheep bells over the distant heath, alone broke the grateful silence!" . . .

" Capital ! capital !" interrupted the little Doc-

tor, laughing with all his characteristic goodhumour at his companion's irony, as the latter proceeded in the same vein. . . .

... "Not to mention all those pretty reflections suggested by the fish catching the bait, just as worldlings do the lures and baits of vanity! with a host of other equally seductive—or, if you please, sedative—dreams. Add to this, the sad compunction, all the while you are torturing the fish, that you are so compelled to lacerate the poor thing's jaws for your own amusement!"

... "Hold, hold, my friend, there you are mistaken, and must absolve me and my brethren of this compunctious whimpering and real cruelty! For know, Mr. Satirist, that loving the dear fry too much to hurt them, I am happy at thinking that they feel no pain from my hook, which sticks in the leathery substance of the mouth, where no nerves are, and consequently no pain!"

"Well said! I am glad to hear such is the case, and can now give the 'gentle angler' credit for somewhat less cant than I had hitherto been inclined to attach to him!"

"To be sure! to be sure! You will find us brothers of the angle no such 'placid tormenters' as you imagined; and with respect to 'contemplative habits,' on which you descanted in such brave terms a moment past, why, I may say, 'so I am fond of contemplation!'—very fond; though, I am willing to own, that my piscatorial musings have generally a hankering after those savoury prospects which I just now portrayed, and which I hope, ere the day closes, to witness agreeably realized! As for the philosophy merely, and reflection that 'shadowy brooks, murmuring falls,' &c. inspire, I leave these to the more sublime votarists of Messrs. Izaak Walton, Cotton, & Co."

"I see you are an 'original' amongst the angling fraternity," observed his companion, smiling.

"Assuredly I am no ruminating or, at least, patient angler as Pope says, but a very impatient one—very eager to catch my game by all the lures of black gnat, dun, may, and palmer fly; and for a ground bait, a grasshopper or cad are my delight. You are an angler yourself?" added the little man, looking up in the stranger's face with a broad grin.

"Oh yes !-a little," was the reply.

"Well said! I thought so. We'll have a day's fishing, then, together. But that we will arrange in due time," . . . continued the little man, busy now in replacing his fish in the tin box. . . . "Are they not beauties! . . . No, no!" he proceeded a moment after, "I am no 'dreamer' whilst I have an angle rod in my hand; and I will confess my exercise of it is not so much for the mere amuse-

ment of the 'gentle craft' as the luxurious char repast I look forward to as its reward! . . . And what, pray," added the bon vivant with a naive look of inquiry, "should a man come to this place for, unless it were for this?"

His companion could not forbear another smile. "Oh!" he calmly replied, "a dish of char is a very desirable thing, and which, no doubt, would whet a man's appetite for a visit to the lakes. However, I will plead guilty to not having thought of this in my wanderings hitherto, which were merely to enjoy the lake scenery—"

"Until I taught you better; come, confess it. Oh, I am glad you have fallen in with me! What matters the 'outside' of the lake, or the beauties of scenery, if you can't have some agreeable recreation after your fatigue? The lack of which, many, I can promise you, have experienced in their unwary and too adventurous rambles. Fine scenery is doubtless a fine thing ! fine thoughts, too, are mighty sublime and divine; but a fine well-dressed char-every other contemplation vanishes at the thought! So, via! presto! let us to the village. If you admire their rich ruddy tint," added the facetious little man, as he opened the gills of one of his victims, " as you see them now, what will you say when they are cooked? when (as I shall shew you) no Maltese orange, with its rich crimson glow, can surpass them. Come! my way is towards the village; and yours-"

"Is in that direction too. I am passing on my way through, merely."

"Might I make bold to ask if you have any particular destination? Indeed, there is but one decent inn in the place."

"No indeed! I shall proceed to some inn—I believe it is one looking on the meer. I expect some baggage to be sent for me there, and then am uncertain when I shall proceed."

"So you are bound for the inn, then? I esteem myself happy in being able to conduct you there. At no place can you be better accommodated than the 'Traveller's Rest;' and if you will afford me the pleasure of your society, I may beg in return that you will satisfy your curiosity in tasting the char, which you will not, perhaps, have a better opportunity of doing in your way through this region, to which they belong almost exclusively. We should always," continued the Doctor, with a merry grin and most important air, "always honour the festive charter of any place through which we pass."

"Assuredly," interposed the stranger, smiling; "and I never pass through Banbury without remembering its cakes,—through Burton without quaffing a draught of its ale,—through Epping without regaling myself with a chicken well flanked with its sausages,—and uow—"

—"You are acting with laudable consistency in doing honour to the char of the meer!" interposed his companion, laughing, as they proceeded walking side by side, and had now reached the village, followed by Bryan. . . . "I shall be most happy," he added, "to join you; and if I mistake not, the sign floating in the air that comes up so refreshingly from the water should be the spot of our destination."

In fact, so it was. A few paces more brought them in front of the "Traveller's Rest," to which pretty little hostelrie the Doctor hastened his step in eager anticipation of the savoury joys in which his soul was now centered; while the stranger paused to take one more view of the lovely waters of the meer, and the rich foliage along its margin, that seemed to dream over the wave through the softened light of evening; and he then followed his companion slowly to the threshold.

CHAPTER IV.

"Come, hostess, dress it presently . . . and thanks be to honest, pretty Maudlin." IZAAK WALTON.

THE "Traveller's Rest" did not take a designation inappropriate to the character it really possessed; in which respect it was laudably dissimilar to the instances of sundry more modern specimens of domestic architecture which parade in their fronts the alluring title "Belle Vue Terrace," where nothing is to be seen but a dead wall; or " Mount Paradise," or " Pleasant Row," where nothing presents itself more "elevated," in the one instance, than a heap or two of rubbish, scattered in unseemly confusion over "ground let on building leases," - or more "pleasant" in the other than a brick-kiln, regaling the neighbourhood with its perpetual tribute of smoke, stench, and suffocation. Unlike, again, the "self-recommending" attribute which may be witnessed, for example, in those volumes whose chief claim to attraction is in the flourish of the title-page, the "Traveller's Rest" did not belie the promise held out by its frontispiece, by any defalcation of good cheer and accommodation, on an experiment being made of its internal economy. Tantalizing, indeed, would it have been if such defalcation had existed; for the "outward sign," the pictorial "frontispiece," was most "inviting," and suggested the blandest associations of recruital and repose. In it you might witness, portrayed by the village Ostade, the figure of an honest wayfarer seated beneath a canopy, copied from the porch of the little inn itself, while the rural interest of the scene was heightened by a back-ground of the Borrodale hills, where the moon sailing "high in æther" (whose "subcerulean," by-the-bye, was somewhat washy,) sufficiently indicated, after the sublime fashion of Hogarth, the late period to which the said wayfarer had protracted his rambles previously to courting repose. The smoke, meantime, from his pipe certainly rendered it doubtful whether the moon was intended to shine clear and unsullied, or whether that splendid effect was to be produced of which the renowned Sylvester Daggerwood was so ambitious, when he paraded in his prospectus of scenery, amongst other effective items in his playbill-" the moon behind a cloud !"

Such was the scene in the outworks or proscenium of our theatre of repose; and swinging as it did, not on a single post, but suspended between two, might have awakened certain unpleasant ideas of a gallows in the minds of those who were thievishly or feloniously inclined; consequently, like Selden's distich* over his door, it warned away all nefarious characters by this significant memento, no less impressively than it invited all worthy "lieges" to march into the porch and seek the recruital the house afforded. Of course it is not meant to insinuate that ideas so disagreeable suggested themselves to either of the persons now be fore the hostelrie, or even if it were possible they could have so arisen, yet the smiling neatness, prettiness, and order of the house itself and its frontage of garden, would have been sufficient to dissipate them.

The porchway, which was deep, and fitted with a rude bench on either side for the swains that regaled them there, was canopied over with the clustering exuberance of the convolvulus, white, pink, and violetstreaked, whose tendrils drooped down over the arch

 [&]quot;Gratus, honeste mihi non claudar inito sedeque, Fur abeas non sum facta soluta tibi."

The reader may see this distich, carved by the hand of Selden, over the door of the cottage where he was born, at the village of Savington, in Sussex.

in front, and straggling into the interior of the porch, partially roofed it as well. Over the walls of the house the vine and an ancient pear-tree with a massive rugged stem formed a rich mantle in front: and over the sides the verdure of the hop luxuriated and wove its way in at the casements, while half way up the wall the yellow and crimson nasturtium also ran. The garden, which surrounded in its lively sweep the whole circuit of the house, was chiefly extended at its back; and, here, along the walls of the lower rooms, there was a verandah of green painted trellis-work, festooned over with the China-rose and woodbine, and to which access was given from the house by a glass door. From the verandah you stepped upon a bowling-green, on which it was luxury to set foot, so soft and velvet-like was it. A Persian poet, in speaking of a piece of lawn such as this, calls it "soft as silk." We Europeans are satisfied with the more common "velvet" simile, which expresses the notion of smoothness better than all the silk in a sultan's wardrobe. At the end of this verdant carpet, a venerable mulberrytree on one side, and a huge walnut-tree on the other, afforded a canopy where many a rustic meeting was held, and many a friendly contest at skittles or bowls instituted.

As a boundary to this lawn, and the garden toge-

ther with it, a brook urged its course, heightening the rural charm and peaceful spell of the spot by the rude murmur of its babblings. The truant stream brawled along, urging its headlong course over huge slabs of black rock, and forming many a cascade as you regarded its far progress from the hills behind, till it swept past along the level—a native rambler, that not even the "Traveller's Rest" could persuade to stay or slacken its pace. From its margin the iris and water-lily looked on themselves in the crystal mirror of the flood, while the rude stream dashed the long lily tresses about with its wanton current, though the flowers smiled on its rudeness the while, as they tinted with their reflected hues its clear translucent surface.

Perhaps now and then the merry voices of the players at bowls would startle the moorhen, where it lurked amidst the yellow osier stems and rich luxuriant sedge that fringed the bank; or some stray bittern, it might be, would spring forth, mingling (delightful discord!) its shrill cry with the laugh of the rustic revellers, and the rude minstrelsy of the pipe, tabor, or viol, that provoked the dance over the sward. And then the flower-borders with which the lawn was encompassed, what studious neatness did they exhibit! "Surely some more than ordinarily cunning hand had shaped and superintended them," thought the

stranger, as he glanced round on them. There the good old-fashioned sunflower, (old-fashioned now, but not at the time of which we speak,) the carnation, balsam, rose, and sweet-william, combined with many a shrub, and many a humble flowret—heart's-ease, and bachelor's button, and violet, and lily of the valley—to add beauty to the spot and balm to the air.

If such was the picture of rural repose, neatness, and charm, that the exterior of the Traveller's Rest presented, it was well supported by that which its internal economy now exhibited to the stranger, whose attention it excited more than the little Doctor's, the latter having been a constant visitor at the hostelrie on many a previous charfishing and eating expedition.

"A delightful little inn, indeed!" said the stranger, as he entered a small and comfortable room called "the parlor," at the back of the house, and looking upon the verandah and bowling-green just described. Into this apartment "of honour" the companions were ushered by the landlady, Mrs. or "Dame" Wetherby, as she was called in the village.

"Excessively neat!" continued the stranger to Dr. Esdaile, as he glanced round the apartment, "and evidently bears marks of good housewifery! It is surely indebted to some more eminent hand for this quiet effect, nay, even elegance of its arrangement, I might say, than is ordinarily to be traced in these rustic 'hospitia!' No coloured daubs on the walls of shepherdesses, in black and gilt frames,—no spun-glass poodles, and miniature wooden flower-pots. There is a chaste neatness and taste prevailing that it surprises me to meet!"

"Ay, this is Gertrude's doing, our landlady's fair daughter; is it not, Mrs. Wetherby?" replied the Doctor, turning to the "good woman" of the house, who was arrayed in a formidable widow's cap, which looked like the ruff of a Poland hen, or a crested white-mackaw. Mrs. Wetherby acknowledged the compliment by a curtsey, though it struck the stranger that its demeanour was rather marked by stiffness than complaisance, while she replied at the same time, addressing herself to him, that "she was glad the gentleman found himself comfortable;" and then proceeded, to Dr. Esdaile's infinite satisfaction, to the important topic of the "arrangement" for dinner of the char, which the Doctor had consigned, tin box and all, to her hand as he had entered the hostelrie.

"Would you please to have the large brace dressed, Sir, or-"

"Oh! by all means, the larger brace, and a small one or two as well, that Mr. —, I beg your pardon," he continued, turning to the stran-

ger, "I have not the honour of knowing your name."

"Colonel* Renmore," was the reply, accompanied by a bow; and if he seems somewhat young for a Colonel, we shall not marvel at this, when we hear it in due time explained.

"And mine, Dr. Esdaile, at your service, Colonel," continued the merry little man, who, bythe-bye, was never in such good spirits as when he was discussing that cordon sanitaire of his own, the arrangement of his favourite char. "Well, I was going to say, Mrs. Wetherby, that we should give Colonel Renmore a specimen of the quality of both the larger and smaller fish,—for they differ often very much, Colonel, I can assure you," he added, with an air of ludicrous seriousness that called forth a smile on the lip of his companion.

"Then the large brace, Sir, and two small ones?"

"Ay,-or three small ones, say," observed the Doctor with continued gravity.

"And dressed as you had them last time, or-"

"Oh, precisely," interposed anxiously our epicurean Doctor. "And let me inform you, Colonel," he continued, turning to Renmore, "that if you admire the taste with which Gertrude, (I beg

^{*} That is, "Lieut.-Col." The name of the family really assumed is of course suppressed.

pardon, Mrs. Wetherby,) Miss Wetherby, I ought to say, has decorated or dressed the room, the garden, and all in fact you see around you, you will hold her good taste in yet higher estimation when you perceive how she can dress the char! you will pronounce this the perfection of that 'arrangement' that has hitherto so laudably struck you. Eh, Mrs. Wetherby,—what do you say?"

In reply to this testimony of the merits of Gertrude's cooking, amongst her other accomplishments, Colonel Renmore observed, as he smiled at the eulogistic Doctor, and made a courteous inclination of the head to Mrs. Wetherby, "that he required no further proof of her daughter's good taste to convince him of it, than the many testimonies he had already witnessed."

"You won't say so, though, when you taste the char! will he Mrs. Wetherby?"

The landlady of the Traveller's Rest, with another curtsey marked with the same stiffness as had struck her new guest in her former one, again acknowledged the compliment paid to her daughter's proficiency, while she replied to the merry Doctor,

"It is for me only to say that it is my daughter's duty to make everything as comfortable as may be in the house for the gentlemen that are under my roof; and if her cooking gives satisfaction I am happy. And pray, Sir, when should you like to dine? now, or somewhat later?"

"Oh, now! by all means!" exclaimed the Doctor, in perfect pain at the thought of any more protracted delay than was necessary in reaching the "Promised Land," the Canaan of his day's fishing peregrination. "I am as hungry as a long day's sport and ramble can make me, as I dare say you are too, Colonel?" looking inquiringly and with somewhat of ludicrous ruefulness in the face of Renmore for sympathy as regarded the state of his appetite.

"Indeed I shall not be at all sorry when dinner is ready."

"That's right! I thought so! You looked fatigued, I thought, when I first saw you. Dinner as soon as possible, Mrs. Wetherby, if you please."

The landlady of the Traveller's Rest accordingly withdrew to obey the Doctor's recommendation of having dinner on table, and with as little delay as possible; while during the purgatory which he was doomed to experience until that looked-for period should arrive, himself and Renmore strolled out at the glass-door already mentioned on the lawn, to admire all that we have above described, and which reflected Gertrude's good management in the order and neatness it exhibited.

They strolled along towards the side of the brook, whose peaceful babblings challenged the rustic echoes of the spot; pausing now and then to admire some shrub or flower in the parterres that were distributed on either side the lawn.

"A very decent, respectable looking dame our hostess," observed Renmore, in a sort of half-inquiry concerning Mrs. Wetherby, "but somewhat demure!"

"A religious twist, my dear Sir! a religious twist!" replied the Doctor, shrugging up his shoulders with a gesture of ludicrous dismay. "Oh, and such a prosaic personage when she mounts upon her hobby of pious or rather evangelical reflection, that I am always glad to make my escape as fast as I can—"

"Upon your own hobby-the angle rod?" rejoined his companion, smiling.

"Indeed I am! or on any hobby rather than worthy Dame Wetherby's; she rides it so pertinaciously, a witch's broomstick is light and airy, a winged Pegasus, compared to it."

"Why, where has she caught these solemn shadows of the spirit, this evangelical twist? which now perfectly account to me for the demureness which I perceived the moment she spoke. A characteristic, too, which appeared the more marked when reference was made to her daughter. Nay, if I mistake not, it assumed the feature almost of displeasure."

"Why the good dame has, I think, had her

head turned a good deal by listening to a dissenting preacher that has been holding forth here for some months past; a sanctimonious person, whose sincerity, however, in his vocation, I am very much inclined to call in question."

"Indeed, this is a pity! There is nothing more interesting to be witnessed in the middle and humbler classes, than a proper and due sense of religious duty; but when infected with the poison of cant or fanaticism, or again, puritanic austerity. ". "There it is! there is the mischief in the instance of our worthy landlady! Her pious propensities are unhappily much tinged with harshness, and warped by certain prejudices which betray the weakness of mind that has exposed her, I fear, to the arts of this preacher—let me see, what is the fellow's name? Oh! Quandish."

"I regret much to hear this! But what makes you doubt this man's sincerity in his vocation?"

"Why, because he has rendered his influence over the mother a stepping-stone, as I suspect, to paying his addresses to the daughter, and——"

But just here the presence of Mrs. Wetherby at the glass-door opening on the lawn, was a summons to her guests to repair to the room where dinner was now being placed on table. Nor did they wait long when, the soup being dismissed, the fondly looked-for "cate" made its appearance! Each fish was served up in the Maintenon style, in an envelop of paper, in reference to which the facetious Doctor exclaimed—

"A charming epistle this from Gertrude! let us hasten to open it, and discuss its contents! Was ever love-letter more amiable !" And certainly the zest with which our gourmand now busied himself in exploring the inviting contents of that envelop may be excused by even the chillest votaries of epicurism !- of such savoury fragrance was the steam,-such luxurious richness was the flavour! The sense of taste here fairly found its paradise, and culinary cunning might claim its apotheosis; the voluptuous assault on the olfactory at once and gustatory sense took the soul by storm, and made bliss, as far as regards animal enjoyment, complete. No gold fish meandering in liquid circles of the purest lymph presented an object of greater beauty than the grace with which these finny fairies of the meer swam now in a soft amber flood of Lucca oil. They were the "Naiades" hailed by that gastronomic faun,-the "woodand-lake loving" Esdaile; or rather, we should say, the "char-and-sauce" loving Esdaile. Little time was lost by the Doctor in making his companion acquainted with the epicurean curiosity before them, a specimen of which he placed on his plate in triumphant confidence of its eliciting all the encomium it deserved.

"Did I not tell you that you would find it superlative?" he exclaimed, the moment he could spare breathing space for speaking, from the luxurious occupation of feasting. "On me, who am no novice as to its excellence, it improves more and more in stimulating my appetite every time I approach it. It is impossible to tire over so rare a 'cate.' What, then, must its spell be upon you, as a stranger, to whom it offers the additional zest of novelty!"

"It is indeed a great delicacy," replied the Colonel, in a more chastened and polite style of encomium than his enthusiastic companion; "it certainly surpasses any ideas I had formed of it from what I had heard. It puts me in mind, in a certain degree, of the more delicate specimens of the chevalier ombre of Lake Leman, and is pleasanter to the palate than the boasted lotte of that lake."

"Mount Skiddaw to a molehill! Chevolier ombre and la lotte cannot stand in comparison with it. No, nor one of the whole seventy species of fish that Rousseau's catalogue enumerates as tenants of Lake Leman. Behold the hue of these melting pink flakes, alluring as the blush on Gertrude's check who cooked them! A bumper to her health, Colonel."

"By all means. We were senseless, indeed, to forget the artiste which Heaven has provided us on

the present occasion, no less than the viands prepared by her; offering an agreeable contradiction to the rule of the proverb, that Heaven sends the last, but a less benign power the first."

"True! The adage has been indeed reversed, and the privilege of the power of evil for once suspended by the ministration of an angel—as you'll say when you see her. And now, Colonel, I think you will remember our lakes for something more inviting than the hackneyed topics (though well enough in their way) of 'mossy banks and precipitous cliffs,' &c. Give me such a specimen of their beauties as the dish before me!"

"Certainly they are beauties sufficiently attractive. But, talking of 'beauties,' I have a curiosity further to set my eyes upon the damsel, the presiding nymph of these haunts, whom they call—"

"The Beauty of Buttermere you would say! Oh! you shall see her all in good time," interposed the Doctor, helping Renmore and himself again to the luxurious "cate" before them. "Everything in good time! At present, nothing can be more beautiful, after a long and fatiguing ramble, than this char. This is our 'Buttermere-Beauty,' at present! A little of this sauce, Colonel; you'll find it an aid to the palate—the Chili vinegar is by you, and then," he continued after a short pause, which was occupied in doing honour

to the contents of his plate, "why then—and after our char-feast, you shall feast your eyes on 'the Beauty.'"

"Is she really so peerlessly beautiful as report bespeaks her?"

"Oh, yes! she seems to have turned the heads of all the swains, high, low, rich, and poor, that come within the dangerous presence of her charms. Every ringlet is a snare for the heart. In every dimple lurks an ambush for the heart-ache—bless me! how exquisite this last and smaller fish to which I helped you is—let me give you a little more! And—what was I saying? Oh! about the Beauty. Ay, her eyes—what do you think, talking of her eyes, happened once to a certain reverend prelate?"

"I can't at all tell," replied Renmore, laughing.
"I suppose, as has been the case with other reverend persons before him, he was not proof against the all-subduing power of beauty."

"Why, he actually forgot himself, and was out in repeating the benediction over her as she was being confirmed!* The long silken lashes of her eyes so bewildered the worthy prelate, that he was

^{*} The anecdote in the text was current in the neighbourhood of Buttermere at the period to which our story refers, and was one of the many anecdotes related of the wondrous effects produced by the charms of this Venus of the lake country. Peter Pindar, by-the-bye, has some stanzas on a similar occurrence.

struck mute with admiration for a brief space, when she, wondering that he did not proceed, ventured to look up, and yet more, to obligingly prompt him in the words that hung suspended on his tongue. He was speedily recalled to himself, took the 'pious hint,' poured forth the suspended benison, and the Beauty of Buttermere was accordingly confirmed!"

"A compliment, indeed, to the miracle of her charms! And pray, out of so many admirers as she must possess, who, of all others, may be the happy swain whose addresses she smiles favourably on?"

"Why, really, I believe no one can hitherto account himself thus blessed! And yet she is no scornful damsel, as the old ballads have it, nor difficult to please; but is, I fancy, somewhat above the common level of her rustic admirers; and what is more, values her freedom too well to be willing to forfeit it——"

" A very Dian of these wilds!" observed Ren-

"And let me add," continued the Doctor, assuming a look and tone of greater gravity, as he now, with becoming respect for the "main chance," lowered his voice, "let me add, that she is right to be cautious how she disposes of herself and her freedom, for she will have a very pretty property one of these days, when Dame Wetherby (you are aware the Beauty is no other than her daughter) adjourns from this little hostelrie to that universal 'Traveller's Rest,' the grave! Nay, it will be worth any gentleman's while even to seek the happiness of her hand."

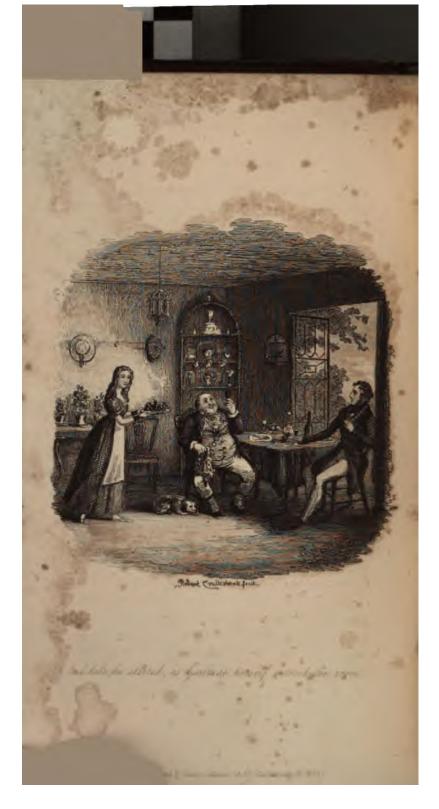
"Indeed!" replied Renmore, on whom this piece of information failed not, evidently, to make a certain impression; which, however, he turned aside as he remarked somewhat abruptly, "pooh! pooh! the man who may be fortunate enough to win the renowned Beauty will have a dower sufficiently rich in her charms! But, by-the-bye, you were saying something in our conversation before dinner about this preacher—this—what's his name?"

"Quandish! ay! the fellow who has equal impudence and cunning to pay her his addresses, in which he is encouraged by her mother; who would consider her alliance with such a pattern of piety as a beatification of which St. Cecilia might herself be jealous!"

"And what does the B eauty say to her saintly admirer?"

"Why, she sees through the mask of his pretended saintship, which would be enough to make him despicable in her eyes, were he not an object of her dislike in himself, and independently of his mock vocation of sanctity!"





"And how does her mother receive this unmasking of her favourite preacher?"

"There is the grievance! and Gertrude is under a cloud somewhat, for the undisguised manner in which she at once expresses to her mother, not only her disgust of this Quandish, but her regret that her parent should be so much under the influence of his persuasion and saintly quackery!"

" Ah, then, this accounts for the corners of the good dame's mouth being drawn so demurely down when her daughter was mentioned! I thought she received the compliments paid Gertrude with singular stiffness. But I long to set eyes on this marvel of the place-this 'beauty' par excellence! though I question much if I did not, at the close of my rambles this day, witness a loveliness that would vie with" . . . and here he started, as Gertrude herself entered the room, while he continued . . . "and whom I recognise in the fair person I now see before me! I do honour to the beauty which struck me at first sight," he added, as he rose and bowed to the lovely girl with so much graceful gallantry, mingled with so much chastened respect and real pleasure at meeting her again, that it could scarcely fail to plead yet more in his favour with the fair object to whom it was addressed. At least we may suppose so, to judge from the glowing blush that overspread her cheeks,

and the smile that added sweetness to a countenance whose downcast graces shewed now "to perfection" (as the little Doctor afterwards declared) those long silken lashes that had produced so powerful an effect on the worthy prelate.

"I thought," continued Renmore, "that the lovely herd-mistress that stole my heart as she left me on yonder heights of Buttermere could be no other than its far-famed 'Beauty!"

"Oh! what you have met before, eh, Gertrude?" asked the Doctor; to which inquiry Gertrude replied with a smile, as she proceeded to place the dessert on the table, to which stage the repast had now arrived.

"Yes!" proceeded Renmore, speaking both for her and himself, "we met for a moment, and what is more, I asked her to direct me to the best inn in the village, and also where I might be happy enough to catch a glimpse of 'the Beauty'—both which requests she fled me without granting."

"Ay, because she knew you could not be long before you discovered both! Eh, Gertrude?"

"I hope, Sir, you had no difficulty in finding your way?" she replied, with the same modest cheerfulness and native grace that had already worked such a spell on Renmore, and which enhanced so much the charm of her person and countenance. As she spoke, her eyes were raised for a moment on Renmore's face, and then sank down again softly as the blush that came and went on her lovely cheek.

"Oh, no," said the young officer, (for such he appeared to be,) while the arch little Doctor fancied he perceived somewhat of a hesitation in his tone that was not unfrequently the case with those who were rash enough to engage in a dialogue with the Beauty. "No," he continued; "but I fear I shall have a less easy task in finding my way out of this spot than into it, now I have discovered one who will render it so difficult for me to leave it."

"That were unfortunate indeed, Sir," rejoined Gertrude, with her usual becoming archness.
"And yet, I have heard that gentlemen like your-self do not generally find it so difficult to take their leave, when inclination prompts them, whatever claims there might once have been to bid them stay." And as she spoke, the blush again involuntarily rose, giving a new charm to her words and countenance.

"Hey, Colonel! What? Gertrude!" exclaimed the facetious Doctor. "Why, I do believe you are smitten with each other already."

Gertrude, as she now withdrew, did but laugh at the Doctor's bantering; for it was quite "in his style" to amuse himself with a pleasantry wherever there was an excuse for one. She laughed with her wonted cheerful simplicity and modest gaiety, which laugh was the only token of dissent (if such it was) which she gave in return to his raillery. As for Renmore, like a true soldier, he spoke his mind bluntly enough, as we may believe, at least, when he said, "For my part, Doctor, I make no scruple in owning you have said no more than the truth. Smitten I am, and am not ashamed to avow it!"

"And strange would it be," rejoined the merry Doctor, as he poured out a glass of claret, "if you were not! To see Gertrude and be simultaneously smitten is a matter of course. The spell is universal; it puts me in mind of the Arabian Nights' story, where I don't know how many of the Sultan's liege subjects are, one and all, overtaken with the sway of the enchanter, and held tight in one position, or set a-singing, or mastered at any rate, in some way or other, by some one paramount law of magic!

—So let us drink the Beauty's very good health," he added, pushing the claret to Renmore.

"With all my heart, Doctor," replied the Colonel, filling his glass; "but yourself! have not you too been sensible?"—

"Oh! I—a man of my tender susceptibility!—
of course I have been amongst the foremost who
have bowed beneath the spell of the enchantress.

Bless me, I should be quite hurt—quite offended if I thought that you imagined me insensible enough to her charms as not to be smitten—according to the universal fashion!"

Though the Doctor might banter, and scarcely be able to feel serious on any subject, or perhaps give Renmore credit for being so on the present occasion, yet we can only say, that we are more willing to believe the sincerity of his avowal than the justice of the Doctor's banter. Nay, we have a better opinion of him for the frankness of his confession; and trust sincerely, if destiny, circumstance, misfortune, or darker causes, rendered disguise at times a necessary precaution, yet that, in the present instance, he spoke as he felt, and without dissimulation.

Well, indeed, might he be "smitten," to adopt again the homely phrase of the Doctor's banter; for if the lovely herd-mistress had appeared all beautiful on Renmore's first rencontre with her, her charms, if possible, appeared to yet more advantage in the guise in which they were now arrayed at the close of the domestic duties of the day. After the "mighty matter" of preparing the char had been concluded, (since to no other artiste than herself would Esdaile trust an experiment, on the success of which his peace of mind so anxiously depended,) she had hastened to perform her evening's simple

toilet. A beauty like hers well illustrated the picture of the poet, in being "adorned the most when unadorned." If she was lovely as any Dryad smiling through the golden security of Arcadian glades when she first beamed on Renmore's sight in the wilder floating gear of her rustic drapery-skimming, with light step, the sunset-slope-her form perhaps appeared with added grace in the symmetry and elegance which the closer dress she now wore was calculated to display. Her ivory neck, and the pure transparent complexion below it, were all given to the worship (we may justly say) of Renmore's eye, since, according to the fashion of the period, the dress was worn lower than a better taste has since adopted. But those virgin snows-that demeanour of modesty and native dignity combined-beamed on the heart of the gazer and on Renmore's, not to pamper the eye of sordid passion, but to banish every thought that could desecrate their purity, or attune itself to less generous, less exalted themes than admiration and devotion! You, over whose remembrance the artificial semblance of Lely's patrician canvas awakes, as we are depicting the peculiar mode of dress in which "the Beauty" was arrayed, banish such unworthy dreams from your minds, and regret that the artist had not drawn his figures from a chaster model. You would then have acknowledged

how much higher a grace, how much more bewitching a tone and feature, the finishing bloom of modesty, of native simplicity, and the guileless affections of the heart beaming through the brow, can impart to decorate beauty! Ye would then have seen the triumph of true loveliness over the spurious lustre, the voluptuous languor of tinselled charms,—the painter's soul would have been purified, and his pencil dipped in the colours of poesy—the colours themselves (as Milton says) "of heaven!" All was pure, in truth, as it was bewitching around her, as Renmore's heart could well testify, where she walked, as Byron sings, in "the light of her beauty."

CHAPTER V.

"The broad and yellow moon
Shone dimly through the fairy's form.

The lovely dreamer's eyes are closed.
Sudden arose
Ianthe's soul! all beautiful in naked purity."

SHELLEY.

A CALMER spirit now pervades the scene. The rural echoes of lea, and down, and hill-slope no longer found a tongue in the lowings of the kine, which had now sought to house them in shed and stall for the night; and the airy foot of the lovely herd-mistress had given way, over moonlight slope and lawn, to the fabled footings of essences scarce more sylph-like than herself. The broad shadow of the cliff spread over those star-silvered waters, and beneath its trancing night-canopy the bittern hushed its cry and folded the wing to roost in its sedgy lair along the meer bank below. The shard-borne beetle was abroad with the bat, and brushed

against the window where the companions sat, as it winged past on its "droning flight." The angler was about to recommend an "adjournment" to rest -a proposal to which Renmore, too happy to be left to himself, was most willing to assent, when his answer was arrested by a voice which sounded somewhat like an ill omen on his ear. The forlorn and lugubrious cry of the screech-owl, whose hootings occasionally resounded from some hollow tree, where it had emerged from its nest to complain to the moon, was music and "sweet numbers" compared to it! It was the voice of some one conversing with the landlady of the hostelry in the entrance passage; and Renmore thought it proceeded from a person he knew, or had known, in consequence of a certain hollow and monotonous tone that characterized it, and which he considered he could scarcely mistake. The recollections and sensations it awakened could not be associated with any very pleasurable circumstances, if it occasioned the colour transitorily to forsake his cheek, while his breath was drawn in for awhile as he listened to the purport of the conversation. Dr. Esdaile had turned away to look out at the window, and enjoy, in the beauty of the "moonlight sheen" of glade and lustrous air, the prospect of a "charming morrow for the char," through the next day's angling. Thus, then, did Renmore overhear the parley:

"Ay, if we go with a hearty determination to find him, we shall not seek him in vain. At least I sincerely trust so."

"True, true, indeed!" replied dame Wetherby, in a style where the "sing-song" sanctimonious tone eminently predominated. "Would that all that had endeavoured to find him had gone about the good work with a zeal equal to your own!"

"Why, whom are they talking of seeking?" asked Renmore hastily of his companion. Meantime, the only difference perceptible in the voice he now heard and that of the person to whom he fancied it belonged was a certain nasal twang, more than a semitone of which had been caught by the worthy and pious landlady in her reply.

"I don't wonder," replied the Doctor, in a subdued tone, and trying to look decorously grave, though the smile that lurked in the corner of his lip denoted something like a reprobation of "cant"— "I don't wonder at your inquiring whom they are talking of seeking!"

" Whom? whom?"

"Why—what is assuredly a very proper duty when entered on with proper feelings—they are, in fact, talking of 'seeking the Lord,' in the language of that vocabulary which puritanism, at one period of our history, and 'cant' at all times almost, uses." "And the persons talking?"

"Are no other than the gentleman of pious and oratorical notoriety, Mr. Quandish, and our worthy landlady. The preacher has formed one of a teaparty, and these are the 'parting words,' as he is now taking leave of his hostess."

"Oh, that is all!" replied Renmore, smiling, and turning away with an air of pretended indifference—"Only, they talked so loudly that I could not help overhearing them, and noticing the character of their remarks."

"Yes," replied Dr. Esdaile, jocularly, "there is no mistaking the deep voice and sonorous twang of the worthy methodist-parson,' as the vulgar more unceremoniously term it. A thief under sentence of death might as easily mistake the purport of the judgment being pronounced on him!"

"A-hem! a-hem! Yes, indeed," said Renmore, "it is a peculiar voice!" And here, if he had been, at first, under any alarm, it was now all dispelled by the purport of the conversation, as it thus proceeded between the preacher and his worthy proselyte, dame Wetherby.

"You will make my respects," continued Quandish, "to the fair damsel—to Miss Wetherby beautiful (yea, and in verity) as a rose of Sharon! You will make my respects to the damsel; and am sorry she denied us the pleasure of her company this evening. Our party without her was mournful as is the hearth of desolation in a ruined abode! Yea, indeed was it!"

"Ah, Mr. Quandish!" replied the hostess, whose aspect of demureness we may imagine was now heightened by a look of pious regret—"Ah, I should be sorry to think that the girl was one of the 'stiff-necked generation,' but—"

"Nay, blame not the damsel! she is as the musk-bed where the fawn playeth—all sweet-ness."

"You speak too kindly of the 'perverse one,' for such she is, for always absenting herself (I grieve to say it) whenever you happen to favour my poor house with your company, worthy Mr. Quandish."

("A good hint, I should think now, to the blockhead to keep out of the way!" said Esdaile, commenting on the remark thus overheard.

"One should imagine so indeed!" replied Renmore, while the Doctor added, "You mistake, dame! Gertrude, is not perverse, though a girl of spirit. On the contrary, she is of the best and tenderest disposition!")

"Ay, but," continued the demure "mamma,"
"we know that much importuning doth gain our
prayer at last. The stone that is long impressed
with the falling of the water-drop doth at length

wear the mark of the same on its breast, although it be hard; and the-"

And here the flow of sanctimonious eloquence bid fair to out-prose even the oratory of the felicitous Quandish himself, but that it was cut "short in medio," like Hudibras' adventure of the bear and fiddle, by sundry voices addressing the pious man and dame Wetherby at the same time. These proceeded from some matronly village gossips who had adorned with their presence the tea-party, (or "tea-total" party, as it is called now-a-days,) of which the "Magnus Apollo" had been the methodist preacher.

- " Come along, Mr. Quandish," said one.
- "It is growing quite late, as sure as I live!"
 exclaimed another.
- "Dear me! if the lake does not shine like a new shilling under the moonlight, for all the world as bright as silver!" said a third gossip; "so good night, Mrs. Wetherby."
 - " Good night, Marm !"
 - " Good night, Maum !"

The last repetition of which valedictory burden having been now twanged forth in recitative by Quandish and his hostess, the matrons who had commenced it succeeded in bearing off in triumph to the village the favourite preacher, while dame Wetherby gave directions to a domestic to close the doors of the hostelry as she now retired to

"And now I can make my escape," said Doctor Esdaile, "since my respected landlady has marched up stairs. For unfortunately being 'honoured' with the good dame's confidence, she generally fixes on me when she is more than ordinarily communicative, (which, no doubt, is the case this evening,) to inflict on me the penance of hearing all her qualms, worldly, domestic, and religious."

"Nay, it shews that you are regarded as a friend amongst your rural patients; and they must have a deep sense of your condescension at once and kindness to them, thus to fly to you for the healing of their mental wounds and uneasiness no less than physical."

"I'm much obliged to them! but with many of them I find that the good nature and tone of familiarity with which I would wish to treat them all is sometimes a little abused, and subjects me to inconvenience."

"The fact is, it is difficult often to shew kindness or familiarity towards people without finding
it is either abused or presumed upon. I do not,
indeed, speak universally, but from what my own
experience has often taught me to be the case.
But the 'confidence' so eminent a dame—"

"And so eminently 'prosaic,' you may add, as our good hostess, is no less disagreeable an infliction than the abuse of one's good nature !"

"Assuredly, nothing is more inconvenient than to be teased by the confidence (as it is called) of weak-minded or qualmish persons."

"You are never seen but seized on as a crutch for them to lean upon, until the weight of their grievances fairly breaks you down—and you then make your excuse and escape together. But good night, Colonel! for it is time we were 'a-bed,' if we wish to be 'a-field' early to-morrow. Good night!" So saying, the Doctor took up his handcandlestick and retired.

"... To be thus frighted by shadows from my propriety," thought Renmore to himself, when left alone, "by a mere voice! Alas! it is thus with conscience, that hears a voice in every wind,—that sees me walk this turbid, dangerous track of life, as if I were stepping at every moment on springtraps!...how altered am I from what I was!.." and then, after a pause, he continued, "yet I never heard a voice more like his.... But why vex myself? since it was a mistake, a 'false alarm.'" With this feeling he dismissed his unpleasant apprehensions, (too justifiable indeed!) and with the spirit of confidence and venture that was natural to him, determined to snatch any op-

portunity offered him of ameliorating his fortunes, and taking advantage of any happier plan of action presented to him. It is needless to say that this happier change in the spirit of his dream was effected under the tranquillizing at once and inspiring thought of Gertrude; and in the happiness found in that interest for her which his heart had worthily conceived, he sought a refuge from the intrusion of every more painful recollection. . . . "Beautiful-and with the prospect of a handsome competency!" he reflected, "My heart and the condition of my circumstances both conspire to make me aim at winning her. Did I love her less than I feel I do, yet the state of my fortunes prompts me not to throw away the chance of placing myself out of the reach of thy malice, galling and bitter Circumstance! I feel the attentions even I have already paid her-such attentions, at least, as could be conveyed by the insinuation of address-are not indifferent to her; and strengthened by time, may they not secure her heart-make her mine! She cannot be blind to the circumstance of the impression she has made on me! What female heart-what female susceptibility is ever blind to such an effect? And I think I may hope she is not on her part disinclined towards me. . . . The interest I shewed concerning her friend Mr. Fenton-the interest too

that I evinced, of a different character, as regarded herself, made a certain impression on her which I could not but detect. . . . Could I win her, wear her! . . . interested in her singularly as I am, and my affection yet increased, (as it would be,) with the gratitude I should feel towards her, as rescuing me from my present anguish, uncertainty, and turmoil-should I not make her happy? Should I not be happy myself? Abroad we should find an asylum, and seek other and safer climes than this, where content might yet be met. The scoffs of the world in this country I could set at nought, and fling from me the remembrance of those calamities that urged me to crime, at the same time that the murmur of those scoffs would die away behind me like a far-fading echo! Yes, it must be attempted! . . . No one, it appears, stands in my way. This preacher, this Quandish, is an object of her disgust. . . Now is the time ! . . . What better plan offers? what better hopes arise? As soon as our growing acquaintance will permit, I will make her a proposal. . . With a wish to make the partner of my choice, of my affection, happy, and be happy myself,-what worthier determination can I settle on pursuing? And then, is not her regard for Fenton, the good clergyman, a secret link between us? Yes, as much so as it is a cause of her distaste for this dissenting saint. What should I care for the world had I but Gertrude to bless me? We would be a world to each other!—Enough, it shall be so! Circumstance—the fears of the past—the hopes of the future—the wish to rescue her from the importunity of one she dislikes—the favourable opportunity this very circumstance offers of the better recommending myself to her—the defiance of fortune, and the malice of man—no less than the love I bear herself,—all, all prompt me to the dear endeavour."

So saying to himself, as he paced up and down the room, he now took up the candle and proceeded to his chamber with a heart confirmed and strengthened by resolve, and a step lighter at once and more assured. He stopped for a moment on the landing-place at the top of the stairs. which commanded a view of the meer. The beauty of the scene - the boughs bending over the water, and tinted with the same chaste silvery lustre in which the moonlight heavens had arrayed the wave-held him for awhile gazing with admiration on it as though the effect of some magic charm :- such was the radiance at once and tranquillity of the spell diffused around! It seemed as though the spirit of the night glided over the calm bosom of the lake in a car of silver, and as Renmore followed in his mind's eye this pleasing fancy. these words escaped him :- " And why should not

scenes lovely as this be found, where life might be happiness for her sake, for Gert—"

Scarcely had her name escaped his lips, and ere yet it was fully pronounced, as he was now turning away from the landing-place towards the gallery, he was surprised by the form of Gertrude herself. She had, in fact, passed him as he stood looking from the window, but so light was her step that he had not heard it. The light of the candle she held was not so dim but that he could discern the blush that glowed on her cheek at having detected him in the mention of her own name, while, scarcely less confused than herself, he wished her a good night as collectedly as he could.

"Good night, Gert. . . . Miss Wetherby!" he said—"I was thinking—of the beauty of the view that window commands. . . . I was thinking . . . of all that was lovely!" and so saying, he made her a bow marked with all that respectful deference which had not failed already to impress her as regarded his manner, and which doubtless imparts to it its chief effect upon the female heart, and proceeded hastily past her.

She acknowledged his "good night" with a curtsey, her eyes being bent at the same time on the ground, and turned down a passage in an opposite direction on her way to her own chamber.

As Renmore passed the room of Dr. Esdailewho, according to the nomenclature of hostelries, was the "Number 3," while himself was the "Number 1" of the gallery-he was greeted by the nasal music that proclaimed the merry little man was fast locked in the arms of sleep. "Rosy dreams" and slumbers "sound," if not "light," according to the more elegant idea of the poet, were his. Rosy were they as the gills of the char, on angling for which he doubtless dreamed, led along through the mazes of his dream by the meanderings of some favourite brook, and smiling in his sleep at his own ingenuity in casting his fly in a "likely spot," and just on the tip of the rippling flood, to be eagerly "risen for" by the hungry fish. We think we hear him cry out in his sleep, " I've hooked him! and a beauty too!" while the expert angler now trundles forth his line from the reel, and after playing with the fish, draws him complacently up and lands him in his hand net. Such were Esdaile's dreams. Mrs. Wetherby's had no doubt led her down to that fane of "sanctimonious" rather than "sacred" oratory, where she hung on the rhapsodies of the Buttermere Rowland Hill, Quandish; while the nasal music which witnessed the soundness of her slumber resounded in chorus with the echoes of that sublime predication which so edified her dream.

Renmore had now courted his pillow in search of the "rest" which every "traveller" under that roof now enjoyed, carrying out to its fullest extent the recommendation of its sign, or name. His dreams, too, promised to be no less a world of delight to him than those of the Doctor and his respected landlady. " How lovely she looked as she blushed at the mention of her name she overheard escape me !" he exclaimed, as he entered his chamber. "She turned not away! no frown marked displeasure at discovering that I thought of her! Herself invites me to love her, and confirms me in the happy resolve I have taken to make her the object of my suit!" Such were his words, and such the happy thoughts which possessed him, and in whose delight and radiance all darker reflections were now merged and dissolved.

He felt a "strange delight" which he had never yet experienced. He felt transported at once to some clime of beatitude and brightness such as that which the Arabian bard pictures, where he tells of the golden boughs, the sparkling fountains, the singing bird, and the luxurious rose-garden of his fable! Such were the thoughts whose hues coloured the dreams of Renmore; and, to heighten all, he saw her form amid their radiance, from whose aspect all their bliss and light emanated—he dreamed of Gertrude.

Well might the ancients invest the passion of love with divine attributes, since humanity is never so near akin to the exalted harmony, the beatitude and purity of heaven, as when love lights its spark of feeling, and kindles it at once with generous aspiration no less than devotional glow! It was a sublime and beautiful "cunning" in the genius of antiquity to array all the loftier duties, no less than the nobler passions, in the colours of heaven itself!that is, under divine personifications; for its sages knew that the chord of feeling was most truly touched when the soul was tuned to the harmony of worship. And in this sublime deception practised on the mind, Honour, the Social Graces or Charities, Virtue, Labour, Renown, martial and civic, were all deified, and solemnized by the spirit as sacred and divine.

If, like one of the genii in a tale of enchantment, we have taken wing and hovered over the pillows of those already mentioned as courting repose, and witnessed them smile through their sleep in happy dreams, shall we forget Gertrude? Her purer spirit ought to smile yet more brightly, and through a sleep irradiated with yet lovelier dreams!

We left her pursuing her way to her chamber, lit by the light of her own blushes not less than that of the taper which she bore. A statuary, to have seen her pass airily by, would have thought of the graces of his favourite Psyche. Scarcely had she entered the chamber than she gave utterance to the thoughts which possessed her heart. Smile on them, chaste Night, and approve them! "Then he thinks of me! I heard my name escape his lips! Never, except in the instance of Mr. Fenton, my childhood's friend and monitor, did I see any one in whom I felt I could so worthily place confidence. . . . And then his interest in the subject when I mentioned the name of that excellent friend and guide! . . . Can he be acquainted with him? . . . And would Mr. Fenton sanction my attachm-?" . . . And here she checked herself as the blush rose at the avowal her tongue gave to the secret of her heart. . . . "It is in vain to disguise from myself," she continued, "that the manner in which this stranger has addressed me contrasts itself too favourably to the nauseating importunity and uncouth advances of that hypocritical minister (she meant Quandish) not to speak to my heart in his behalf. But what am I saying ! these are foolish thoughts, and for suffering which to occupy my mind a moment I am to blame. How vain, how idle are our secret thoughts often, and 'what extravagant superstructures (as Mr. Fenton used to say) do we raise on what light and uncertain foundations! Here am I, in this humble walk of life which I tread-here am I, just because I have

felt a little flattered by the trifling attention of one so much my superior in station, harbouring fancies at which my better sense can but smile. No, no; a person of birth and superior station in society can mean little more than to flatter the vanity of a humble village girl, however decently brought up she may have been, when he offers her attention. . . And yet," (spoke Nature, unwilling to forfeit so pleasing a contemplation,) " is sincerity inconsistent with the attentions I have been sensible of? Or am I mistaken in believing the character I speak of as being too generous and too honestly proud to tamper merely with the esteem he is so well able to awaken?"

She gave voice to these meditations as she stood looking out, at the casement, on the lawn and its parterres, the shrubs, the flowers, and all the favourite objects of her daily care. Her eye rested on them, indeed, but not now to heed them; for the objects which her musings followed were seen by her mind's eye, and the images it rested on were from within! Dim and vision-like those mazes of earth spread before her, "glistering" in the dewy vapour that robed them as with a veil, and gleamed, softly tinted, in the silvery starlight. More lovely from their very imperfectness, they "dreamed before her;" nor less pleasing nor less imperfect were the objects that she dwelt on in the hopes and fears

that now strangely, and for the first time, met her as she looked into her heart. But these visions, however naturally entertained by a young, a susceptible mind, called forth, too, as they were, by the challenge that had been addressed to them, were speedily dismissed; and Gertrude turned away from them and the casement at which she had stood together, with a smile at what she had considered her own vanity; while she now addressed herself to repose.

She had turned away, indeed, from those thoughts, but they still recurred to her in the dream that illumined her pillow. They still recurred in all their loveliness, pure and bright (to use Dryden's well-known illustration) "as young diamonds in their 'infant dew.'" Fairer to the mental vision, we may well say, is that bosom's interior, the shrine of that pure spirit, than even her outward graces to the eye! Her soft cheek was slightly flushed, as she slept, with the joy of her vision, a smile playing on the lips; and she fancied that she saw herself again transported to the sunset-slope where Renmore first met her, invested, as has been described, in its golden light, and that of her own blushes, as he addressed her. The manly grace of his form, and the distinction of his bearing-its native pride softened by the gentleness of his address-all awoke before her vividly as it had first greeted her. But the charm of the present moment was greater than

that of the real period reflected in her dream. The distance of incipient acquaintance did not warp the pleasure of this ideal meeting with any "strangeness!" No; hand in hand with him, Gertrude, with a lighter foot than usual, seemed to skim the sunny slope; and onward they rambled through mazes of flowers and banks, sweet with thyme as Hymettus of old; there she fancied they sought their home, amid realms of so much charm and content, and yet more in that happier world of each other's confidence and love! Such were the harmonies of those thoughts their hearts respired; such were the thoughts, too, that mutually found a tongue! Onward they wandered. A venerable figure met them, and smiled as he breathed his benison on them and said, "It is well, my children!" In that smile of benevolence the countenance of Fenton was recognised, and as he turned from them, they continued to proceed through the bright labyrinth of content, and bloom, and security which they had sought, when, lo! the purple light of that dream became overcast, and as, engaged in each other's converse, where soul reflected soul, they were beguiling the summer hours securely under a canopy woven with roses, and myrtle, and agnus castus flower, they were suddenly startled from their rest. The fearful yell of a tempest it was that now raged around them; and as they both rose, pale and scared, and

attempted to fly, they found themselves held back by an arm that sternly grappled with them. On looking round to witness the antagonist that, with a strength like the twinings of some huge serpentsome Laocoon's "asp,"-held them back, they recognised a countenance dark with malice and fiendish purpose - it was that of Quandish. They endeavoured in their struggle to turn back again to the canopy of roses, but the forked lightnings only gleamed over it to shew things loathsometoads and adders, and the foul decay of a charnel vault, strewed with skulls, that seemed to grin on them in mockery of their terror. They then strove to fly forward again, still wrestling with the "difficult" hand of their antagonist, whose grasp was no sooner fought away from than it seemed to clench itself again on them with increased firmness. . . . "Ha! ha!" he seemed to cry out, with fiendish glee, " I will mar the happy ramble I am forbidden to share!" And the earth now yawned beneath them, and the side of the precipice on which they combated stood naked towards the gulf that gaped, fathoms deep, below it. Oh the anguish of that struggle !- its powerlessness to wrest them away from the gripe of the enemy, and the terror lest another movement might hurl them, in its lost footing, down the steep. Yet if this was their doom, it was not quite unavenged, for in the agony now

of the "close," and in the last effort to snatch themselves away from the dreaded brink of the precipice, their footing failed, and headlong they were hurled down it, dragging along with them their keen antagonist. His demoniac laugh still sounded in their ears, clearly audible despite their own cries and the elemental roar of the tempest that still battled around them. "Ha! ha!" it shouted, "I will yet mar the happy" . . . and then a wracking gust of wind drowned the strain, which instantly, however, burst forth again. . . . "Ha! ha! I will yet mar the happy ramble I am forbidden to" . . . and here the stunning crash of the rock that fell with them, and to which they had vainly attempted to cling, as they first felt themselves about to fall, awakened a thousand echoes through the gulf, and drowned that voice of fearful mockery and fiendish triumph!

It is needless to say that the smile that had played on Gertrude's lip during the harmony of the earlier part of her dream had fled, together with that "purple light of love" that had invested it; and, with flushed cheek, a heart beating with turbid pulsations, and breath deep drawn, she awoke, when, lo! she opened her eyes to witness the face bent over her, and read the frown, betokening reproof and displeasure, of her mother.

"Gertrude! what! not up yet? How is this?

Do you know the hour? What can have made you sleep so late? Your rest seems to have been a troubled one. Rise immediately, I desire of you."

The lovely herd-mistress wanted not any better clock than the sun; and as she obeyed her parent's summons to rise, and hurried hastily to the casement to look forth on the broad and cheerful light, she answered by an expression of surprise at finding it so late, while she regretted not having been already abroad.

The visions of the night she did not consider it worth while to interpret to one from whom they would have met but with reprobation. Nay, she chid them herself as soon as she was left alone to reflect on them. At present she satisfied her austere parent by a promise that she would soon be down stairs. " And hark !" she added, "poor Fanchette and Rose (her two favourites out of the herd) are calling to their mistress in their lowings, and tell me I ought long ago to have led them forth to the hill-pasture. . . . Dear mother, I will soon be with you. . . . Poor creatures, I will soon come to you." . . . And so saying, the fair herd-mistress proceeded with what dispatch she might with her simple toilette, all thoughts of the dream of the night being now banished in her anxiety no longer to delay the accustomed and welcome duties of the day.

CHAPTER VI.

"Painful to thee, and from thy anxious thought Of dissonant mood."

COLERIDGE.

RENMORE's first thought in the morning, after that which was devoted to Gertrude, was, how he should emancipate himself politely from the companionship of his "friend" the Doctor. For, though goodhumoured, and good-hearted too, in the extreme, yet he was not without inquisitiveness; and his society, though, as far as regarded himself alone, it was perfectly innocuous, yet it might still be the innocent instrument of leading our hero "across others," whose neighbourhood might be fraught with danger. Exercise what vigilance Renmore would as to his movements, yet it still appeared to be his destiny to be dragged (whether he would or no) into new adventures and amongst new companions, the result of which naturally kept alive in his breast a perpetual apprehension.

Of all the sojourners at the hospitium of the "Traveller's Rest" the little Doctor had been the most alert (or "sprack" as they call it in the North) to start up and hail the "new-born day." Hurrying on his dressing-gown, he had waddled to the casement, and throwing aside the neat white and pink lined curtains with which Gertrude's hand had decorated it, he gazed on the face of the "orient morn," as he exclaimed, " Charming ! delightful ! here is a glorious day for plying rod and line!" and his little round freckled face shone with joy, not quite exalted enough in expression for us to say it reflected that day-beam's glory, but exhibiting, in the distended corners of the mouth, that honest grin of satisfaction and complacency which has been designated by various humorous authorities "the grin of a Cheshire cat."

With all alacrity, the little man's toilette being dispatched, down he came to breakfast.

"Where's Colonel Renmore?" he said to Mrs. Wetherby, who was herself assisting to place the breakfast things on the table. . . . "Fatigued, I suppose, with his yesterday's ramble, and rather late in consequence?"

"And you are early, Sir," she replied. "Oh, it is a pleasure, verily, to be up betimes on such a morning as this, and bless Heaven for the existence bestowed under it! Yea, for the life which is

capable of enjoying the happiness yonder bright skies and the cheerful sun kindle in us!"

"Why, now, that is true, Mrs. Wetherby," replied the Doctor, while he added to himself, "Pity, however, it was spoiled by the sad infection of that canting air!" and then he continued aloud, "Yes, yes, a bright sun, and the prospect of a fine day's fishing never permit me to remain slumbering the precious hours away! . . . Whose portmanteau is this? How came it here?"

"That, Sir, is part of the Colonel's baggage. Jock, the Buttermere carrier, brought it—a graceless clown, I fear much. It arrived in the course of yesterday evening, and ought to have been taken up, with the rest of his things, to his room," continued the landlady, as she forthwith gave directions to a domestic to execute this duty; "though in truth," she added, "the Colonel wanted not his other baggage wherewithal to complete his apparelling."

"Stop! stop! stop!" cried the inquisitive Doctor, as the portmanteau was being lifted away, while himself was occupied in reading the address on a card attached to it. "Heyday! the Honourable Colonel Renmore, M.P.! . . . So you have a Member of Parliament in your house! Well, I shall not forget my friend, Colonel Renmore, "M.P.," when I am in distress for a

frank! I took him for a distinguished person at first sight; and his address, bearing, and remarks, all confirmed me in my opinion."

Just as these words were uttered, in came Renmore, and the hostess received her distinguished guest with a right reverent curtsey, observing, "that the portmanteau in question had been just sent up stairs to his room, with apologies for its not having been sent up sooner. So saying, she withdrew, leaving Renmore and Doctor Esdaile at breakfast, a component part of which was of course some broiled char, without which the genuine "laker," at the period now in contemplation, would feel as much under denial as a Highland dweller along the banks of Spye or Inverary water would without a "salmon steak." But to leave the char (to which due honour has been done to satisfy the keenest epicure in a preceding chapter) and continue the conversation-

"And the address on the portmanteau, which caught my eye," said Dr. Esdaile, "has instructed me that I may make bold, when in distress for a frank, to request one of Colonel Renmore—if it is not taking too great a liberty."

Renmore smiled as he replied, with a polite inclination of the head, that " a frank was always at the Doctor's service."

"You don't know," rejoined Esdaile, "how

much the 'good folks' in these remote regions (as indeed they do everywhere) think of the favour of a frank!"

"Yes, a Member of Parliament is chiefly looked on, as far as his correspondence-loving friends are concerned, as an instrument of franking utility!" observed Renmore, good-humouredly.

"A frankable animal!" exclaimed the Doctor, laughing. "Oh, you will be much in request with various friends in the neighbourhood to whom I shall have the honour of introducing you, should you permit me. Mr. Lawton, the 'Squire,' (as they call him,) of Blacktarn, and his fair daughter Laura, will feel highly flattered by the acquisition of so distinguished an acquaintance; and——"

The communicative little Doctor was running on, as much pleased himself at the prospect of introducing the "distinguished stranger" to the circle around as any of the circle itself could have been at the honour of the introduction, when Renmore, alarmed at the topic of society, which he was so anxious to avoid, was obliged to interpose an excuse.

"You are very good; and I should have been delighted to avail myself of the kind offer you make me of——"

"Charming girl, Laura Lawton-heiress to an estate of 3000l. a year!" . . .

" Indeed !" . . .

"And her father as excellent a person as you can find anywhere."—

" No doubt ; no doubt."

"Though he has his peculiarities—his oddities!
You will see them at church next Sunday, and——"

"You are very good, but-"

"Oh, not at all! I shall be too happy to-"

... "Really my stay in the neighbourhood is likely to be so uncertain—so short—that I can hardly look forward to making any acquaintance here. I should hardly like to do so, merely to break it off again so speedily. I am a mere bird of passage, and no sojourner here beyond taking a ramble by the meer-sides and along the hills."

"The very object, then, in which my poor services can be available," replied the Doctor, determined not to let his distinguished friend escape him, as he now rose hastily, breakfast being at length terminated. "By all means, Colonel," he continued, "lose no time in seeing as much of the country as you can. I will myself be your guide; and a little angling excursion will be just the opportunity for you to see the most charming haunts it possesses. The weather is delightful; let us lose no time.

So saying, the Doctor sallied forth in quest of his fishing implements, not waiting to hear the excuse Renmore begged to offer, as he said, "Really, having so many letters to write to my constituents and others, I fear I must be a prisoner to-day, and must decline your kind——"

But Esdaile had hurried away, exhibiting a pertinacity as active as that with which he would secure a fish that, though shy at first, he had at length beguiled into taking the fly. It was too happy a treat for the lively Doctor, in the monotony of an existence in the Cumberland and Westmoreland wilds, to have a new-comer to "lionize" round the region of mountain and meer. His love of novelty would not permit him to throw away a boon so providentially offered, and so welcome to his bustling disposition. If he heard Renmore's excuse, he would not listen to it; so our hero, tacitly commiserating himself for the penalty the Doctor's officiousness imposed on him, took up his hat, and followed his "friend's" steps reluctantly to the entrance door, determining to make his escape as soon as possible. Meantime he looked warily forth at the porch on all sides, and seeing no soul stirring to interrupt the beautiful solitude of the lake and the surrounding haunts, he quieted the apprehensions which any want of vigilance on his part must necessarily awaken.

"My rod, my fly rod, if you please!" exclaimed the angler, asking a domestic for his fishing implements, when they were placed in his hand by dame Wetherby herself, who issued from a little room at the side of the passage, close by the entrance a retreat which was the "sanctum sanctorum" of her meditations and parties—of piety and—tea.

"Ah, Doctor," she whined forth, as she came into the porch where her guests were standing, "I never see you in this spot but it brings the tears into my eyes, to think of the time when you used to look in regularly here from your fishing to see my poor dear late husband!"—and here her utterance was impeded by the handkerchief, which doubtless she intended to appear as though it stopped the sorrow at her eyes.

"Ah! indeed it was a period of painful uncertainty; but it is vain to regret over a man when Death, that stern angler, has once booked him... This 'top' bends nicely, does it not, Colonel," he broke off, exhibiting his angle rod to Renmore... "Ah, Mrs. Wetherby, you lost a good husband when poor Mr... A prime piece of hazel, Colonel," he continued, again recurring to the rod, "and will 'play' well if a good-sized fish tugs at the line... Yes, yes, Mrs. Wetherby, he was a worthy man your late husband—a worthy man! But come, Colonel," he added, in an under tone, "for now I fear our worthy landlady's oratory will begin to flow—perhaps more copiously than her tears."

Nor was the Doctor mistaken, for the spring of

Mrs. Wetherby's sensibilities having now been awakened, she would have inflicted a Jeremiad which would infallibly have spoiled a good day's fishing, had the angler been "remorseful" or "ruthful" enough to stay and listen to it.

"A worthy man he was, you may say, Doctor," continued the 'bereaved widow.' "Ah! I remember it was his pleasure to be wheeled into this porch, and sit in the sunshine, after he lost the use of his limbs, poor dear man; and Gertrude would sit by his side and wait on him. Oh dear! a poor lone woman has he left me! We did all we could to keep up his flagging strength—but who shall say nay to the judgments of Heaven? Man proposes—"

"But Heaven disposes!" interposed Esdaile, hastily, tired now of weeping for the dead with one eye and ogling at the brighter associations of life with the other. . . . "It is so, it is so, Mrs. Wetherby," he continued, shaking his head, and at the same time fidgeting out of the porch-way, accompanied by Bryan, who now made his appearance again, leaping upon his master. . . "Good morning, my dear ma'am, good morning!"—when now, being fairly out of the porch, and some few steps advanced on his way, he relieved himself of the restraint he had been labouring under, and indulged in a little laughter.

"Why, what is the theme of your merriment?" inquired Renmore, smiling.

"To hear my worthy landlady pretend to lament and whine over the loss of a man that, when he was alive, she slighted and could not bear."

"What was her reason for this? though in this little piece of hypocrisy she exhibits what is witnessed in many besides herself!"

"No doubt, no doubt; but the fact is as I tell you. As to the reason of her dislike to her husband, I really cannot speak—that is, for certain, but——"

"But what?" asked Renmore, as his informant stopped short in his tale with a significant look.

"Why, there was a story whispered about that our Beauty of Buttermere owed her parentage, on the father's side, to a higher stock than the late 'good man' Wetherby!" . . .

" Indeed !" . . .

"I don't know the truth of it, but it is whispered, as I said before, that our worthy hostess was 'married up,' as it is termed, to her late 'dearly beloved and lamented' husband for convenience sake, and at the kind suggestion of a certain noble lord, also lately deceased."

"And so (be it for what reasons it may) Mrs. Wetherby's affections never entered into the marriage contract she was induced to make?" "Exactly; and this she testified, by exhibiting a perpetual slight towards the late Wetherby, who, having suffered from a stroke of palsy, was rendered a cripple, and not long after died."

"Was Gertrude at all aware of these reasons, whether truly founded or not, of her mother's dislike?"

"Not a whit. She not only believed—(as perhaps, indeed, she was justified in doing, for all I have mentioned is but surmise)—she not only believed, I say, that Wetherby was her father, but ever attended him, in his decrepitude, with the most constant and unremitting affection."

"Charming girl! She is as excellent as she is lovely! In fact, it is impossible to doubt it, if you only look at the suavity of her countenance! To think that her mother, who bears witness, as we heard her, to her attention to her late father, should maunder about her being 'perverse!' I am sure she is amiability itself!"

"Ha, ha! smitten again, young man, I must exclaim!" cried Esdaile, laughing. "But you say rightly. Only see how a puritanic 'turn' prejudices the mind. Dame Wetherby, be assured, was originally of a different complexion from that demure person she has of late years become; and more especially since she has been imbibing the sanctimonious unction of this Quandish. . . , 'Perverse, indeed! you may well exclaim with surprise, at our hostess so designating her daughter. No, she is not perverse; but I can tell you, as I have remarked before, she is a girl of spirit, and, let me add, the person that shall win her choice as a husband will be no common person, depend on it."

Renmore looked away at the lake and the beautiful scenery round it, not wishing to shew by his countenance that his companion's words had any effect on him.

"Ah! a lovely scene indeed, and I don't wonder at your being lost over it," resumed Esdaile. "And now suppose we try this side of the meer first, before we go to the brook that runs into it? There, you can perceive it," he added, pointing it out at the further end of the meer; "if we don't find any char where we are, we are sure to be more successful in the brook."

"By all means," replied Renmore, while he added to himself, "I trust to be able to make my escape, however, before you have tried long your success where you are." In fact, if he had been a lover of the angle, he could have derived but little enjoyment from its use, for his thoughts were occupied too much on more interesting matters, and less, indeed, concerning his own safety, than on Gertrude. Well, the Doctor tried his luck for some little time without success; not a single "rise" could he get

from the char, and Renmore began to get more and more fidgety.

"There is not ripple enough on the water here, Colonel; so suppose, without more ado, we adjourn to the brook."

"By all means do you repair thither; but as to myself, I regret that I have no more time than I require, before the post goes out, for writing letters to my various correspondents."

"Ay, a Member of Parliament must, no doubt, have full demands on his time for answering letters, amongst other items of his public duty;" and then, seeing Renmore was about to turn away into another path, he added, "I am so sorry you will not permit me to introduce you to a very excellent person, a Mr. Howbiggen, a patient of mine, and whom I am going to visit in the course of the morning."

"You're very kind; but I really am unable now to allow myself the pleasure."

"Well, another day. I shall most certainly not forget to look in upon you.—Bless me," he added, grinning in Renmore's face, "you look very young for a Colonel."

"I am older than I look, perhaps . . . But interest, a-hem—family interest," replied Renmore, endeavouring to smile, though he could not help reddening with vexation at the pertinacity of his comrade, who replied,

"Ay, true; the scions of our noble and more influential houses can command the promotion which merit, unaided by the same powerful assistance, often fails to obtain. No ill compliment to you, Colonel."

The Doctor's remark, indeed, was right, however troublesome it might be. Men younger than our hero, who was scarcely nine-and-twenty, and looked younger than he really was, held, at that "notorious time" the rank we find him assuming.

"Not at all, not at all," replied Renmore, fidgeting off, and smiling good-humouredly.

"Well, as you are determined to deprive me of your company, I will not press you to come any further with me, but—"

["Oh, good heavens!" ejaculated Renmore to himself, "what more hangs on that 'but!'"]

"But I could have introduced you, had you been a little less a martyr to your public duties, and the pain of uncertainty as to your movements,—I could have introduced you not only to the Lawtons I mentioned at breakfast, and my worthy patient Mr. Howbiggen, and also his maiden sister—"

-[" Delightful !" thought Renmore.]

. . . "But-"

. . . [" Another but! Oh! good heavens!"]

"But to a galaxy of 'geniuses,' or 'genii,' if you please,—an intellectual and literary circle that I call the 'Genii of the Lamp,' from their studious propensities, or the 'Genii of the Lake,' from the romantic region of their dwelling-place!"

"You are very—particularly—obliging, and at a more convenient opportunity I shall—"

"By all means! to be sure! I thought you could not like, while in the neighbourhood, to be left in solitude. The 'Genii' I speak of would delight you. I need not name Golefield, and Routhmore, and Woodsland, whose fame has spread far beyond the wilds which they decorate by their presence."

"Indeed, I honour their august names, and trust sincerely" (and here he spoke truly) "that circumstances will not debar me the pleasure of making acquaintances which I contemplate with so much interest,—nor render it necessary for me to quit a neighbourhood I am so delighted with—especially—"he thought to himself, his heart taking up the pause where his words desisted—"since Gertrude's presence so strongly heightens its charm."

"Well, I am delighted to hear you hold out hopes that we shall yet have the honour of your addition to our circle."

Renmore bowed and moved away.

"And I may be permitted to look in for a frank."

Renmore bowed again in assent, and "edged" yet further off.

"I beg pardon, but Colonel Renmore's family

is that of Lord Clanrenmore, is it not, whose estates are in Caithness?"....

But Renmore had, fortunately for himself, taken advantage of a turning in the path, which led him round the cliff under which their parley had taken place, and when Esdaile had looked round for a reply to his last interrogatory, his comrade had disappeared.

"A fine, handsome, gentlemanlike fellow !" said Esdaile to himself. "A splendid match (a bon parti, as the French have it) he would make for Laura Lawton, the heiress of Blacktarn, Come, come; though her family is not quite so lofty a one as that of Renmore of 'Clan-ren-more, county Caithness-Colonel-M.P." &c. &c., yet still she is an amiable damsel, and pretty too; and with that most delightful of 'female attractions' (as some consider it), 'money,' she may well command the hand of even a loftier suitor than my friend the Colonel. And now for the brook . . . and then to look in at my worthy patient's, Mr. Howbiggen's. His sister, that estimable lady, yet gossip-loving spinster too, will ask me to stay during luncheon with them; and by the time I have sufficiently tried my luck in the brook it will be the hour when I must feel my worthy friend Mr. Howbiggen's pulse. How delighted Miss Howbiggen will be with the news of this 'new arrival.' Let me seeI shall administer news and food for gossiping to her, and physic to him. . . . He shall continue the powders—they do no harm, if they do no great good." . . .

With these salutary reflections, and prospects of dispensing aliment both for mind and body, the piscatorial Doctor proceeded, followed by Bryan, to his favourite brook, from which Mr. Howbiggen's cottage was not far distant. It was situate on the borders of the meer, its white walls being discernible from the spot where Esdaile stood, as they peeped through the trees that surrounded them. So leaving him to that "medicine of the soul" which the reflections of his happy solitude afforded-leaving him to this, no less than to administer, in due time, those more material medicines which his patients might require at his hands, we will now turn away from him, and follow on the track of Renmore. Was his solitude equally happy? Were any happy reflections his,-to "medicine" the soul? and

"Cleanse the foul bosom of that perilous stuff
That weighs upon the heart"?

as Macbeth says. At any rate the thought of Gertrude was balm to his spirit. But let us "after him," and see what befals.

CHAPTER VII.

"He was a wayward and a simple child,
Fond of each gentle and each dreadful scene."

BEATTIE'S Minstrel.

"I fear thee, Ancient Mariner,
I fear thee!"

Coleridge's Rhyme of the Ancient Mariner.

There is a crag that overlooks the land far and wide, from the height of Skiddaw to the banks of Ullswater. There the spectator quaffs largely the delight that azure lake-floods, bosomed in mighty natural basins at the mountain's foot—that rills, sparkling in spiral silvery columns down the hill-side—that blossomed meads, and copses, and moss-chequered banks, some nearer, some further off and losing them in the distance, afford,—while all mingle in one vast and varied prospect, and stretch in giant panorama around, beauteous as magnificent! . . . There is a crag where the riven earth, as though cloven by some mighty convulsion of

nature, lays bare the secrets of a past world,—there the searcher after sublime truth, the geologist* above others, delights to trace, in legible characters, in its gigantic page, the mystic intelligence of Eld it reveals to him.

Poring on that dread writing on Nature's wall, writ by the invisible hand of the Creator, stood one on the brow of the precipice, looking down its dizzy height. The crow that poised it, on slowwheeling pinion, midway down the steep, was as a speck; and the sense reeled with gazing, till it seemed, to any one looking down it, as if a certain fatality impelled him to fling himself headlong over the crag-when, shuddering at so perilous a sensation, he has hastily drawn back, and placed himself beyond the reach of that verge's fearful fascination. It was with a sensation such as this that the person who had been standing over the chasm, scanning its riven sides and the geological characters they displayed, turned away, and suddenly came face to face with our hero, whose pathway from the meer bank had led him, by its devious windings, along the cliff side to the spot where he now stood.

There was an intelligence and contemplative cast in the countenance of the person that arrested Ren-

^{*} Granite, sienite, porphyry, trap, are all geological features of this region. The slate formation consists of three groups of hills.

more's attention. His full dark eye was stretched with the gaze through which the mind's inquiry seemed poring; and yet there was mingled with the exalted character of genius a simplicity too. and good humour, evinced in the smile that played habitually on the lip. And this characteristic was betokened also in the full, ruddy, cheerful aspect of the cheek, that added a benevolence of appearance not always found coupled with the higher and generally sterner features of intellect. If the appearance of this person was such as to excite Renmore's interest, if not curiosity, the remarks that subsequently escaped him were calculated by their singularity, no less than reflection, to increase it; and if Renmore has been witnessed as entertaining any apprehensions, generally speaking, as to meeting people, they, in the present instance, gave way to sentiments of a very different and more elevated order.

"A noble point of view this!" he observed, breaking the silence maintained by both spectators as they looked from the height.

"Ay," said the other, answering the remark without interrupting the fit of musing in which he appeared to be absorbed—" I was following a somewhat strange train of reflection as I looked at the records of a past world, that the strata of that rock exhibit."

"Indeed, they open a vast field to reflection, both awful and curious,—but what, in particular, suggested itself to you?" inquired Renmore, turning to the geologist, (for such he took him to be,) whose eyes were still gazing on the vacancy of some dream, or image of the mind, that occupied and amused his intellectual vision, as he smiled through his dream at the illusions pictured in it.

"Why, I was thinking, as I looked back on the image of the past, portrayed in the sublime crayons of that mighty Dædalean hand that made all things,—I was thinking, I say, as I looked back on the past, and traced the new series and creations of existence it exhibits as concomitant with new revolutions of earth and its improved strata—that one day, when this present existing surface of the globe is, with its human progeny, swept away, a yet better and improved essence or birth—ay, a purer porcelain than human clay, might be the produce and accompaniment of an improved quality, too, of strata."

"An interesting and original speculation, truly!" said Renmore, smiling; "but what makes you think that any new stratum would be an improvement? Would it not rather be a worse, according to the belief that this present formation of earth is to be destroyed by fire? The melancholy adust and black hulk it will exhibit would appear to my

notions rather like a giant mole of cinder, or scattered rock, or mass of molten and worked-out ore dross."

"A just remark," said the geologist, (for so we will call him,) smiling as he felt he had met with a man of imagination, and so far, to a certain extent, a congenial spirit.—"You exhibit to me no unpoetical or unjust idea—but the curiosity of my own speculation is not so much of a chimera as you might imagine. Its probability is, assuredly, corroborated by the evidences of the past."

"And how so?" asked Renmore, smiling with mingled curiosity and incredulity.

"Why, these strata all bear record of an improved successive character as regards their capability of sustaining life in the beings that dwelt on them. Of each the soil, or "matter," has successively been less reluctant. On each an improved birth, no less than a new essence of vitality, has been engendered,—why then, should not, through Time's dark mazes, be traced a day—a dim futurity—when this present surface of earth, on which we crawl, (and where we frame such extended and mighty dreams, and so disproportionate to our petty span,)—why, I say, should not an improved surface of earth, under a new revolution of the globe, take its succession in the mighty routine which those strata before us shew it has already

made? Yes! after earth has been swept away, I can trace, from the assurance of its past gradations and successive improvements—a purer surface and a more refined soil as the cradle of a purer progeny, too, and more refined essence of vitality."

"It is, at any rate, a pleasing and fanciful idea," he continued, in conciliation of the self-love of the person he addressed, "such as might delight the imagination of a certain eminent genius that, I understand, dwells in this neighbourhood—I mean a Golefield, or even a Milton."

The geologist smiled as he said, "Milton's dreams were less fanciful and ideal, less vaguely original, you will perhaps say, than this poor Golefield's you speak of. Milton's imagination looked for its visions more in decorations of the past, and in received ideas, than in speculations of futurity and future novel creations. This metaphysical characteristic of imagination belongs to a later day—to German intellectual innovations—from which, perhaps, Golefield may possibly have caught a certain contagion of this kind—a certain tone—though, indeed, no positive hypothesis or system of opinions. As to the subject," he continued, "which has just now been amusing us, I have witnessed, by-the-bye, a little poem* by Golefield,

^{*} This is subjoined in the appendix, that it may be referred to, as illustrating the dialogue that has just taken place.

of which, should we meet again, I doubt not that I shall be able to obtain you a sight." Thus conversing, they passed down the hill by the ensy slope on which the height was approached on its opposite and southern side, Renmore feeling his curiosity more and more awakened as to who the person could be in whose company he was, and who was characterized by so singular and (which chiefly amused him) so sincere a train of thought or speculation, despite its being so fanciful. "This must doubtless be," he said to himself, "one of Dr. Esdaile's Genii of the Lake.' I should have imagined it had been Golefield, by the peculiar fanciful characteristics that mark him. But it cannot be so, for if it had been himself, he would surely have said so, on my mentioning the name. Whoever he his, he is no common character; and if he is a geologist, he is not by any means of the common every-day tribe of brickbat hammerers and mechanical gropers after " floetz, quartz, and trap."

Whilst engaged in these reflections, the attention of our hero, and of the geologist as well, was engaged by the appearance of an old man dressed in a sailor's habit, slowly approaching them from the valley at the entrance of which they now found themselves, having arrived at the foot of the ascent.

"Oh, here is old Mike! poor old man; if he is going our way I'll help him carry his bundle," said the geologist, with characteristic simplicity and kind-heartedness, "and beg a story of him in return."

"What! is he, pray, one of the 'Genii of the Lake?" inquired Renmore, smiling.

"Oh yes, indeed, I may call him so! He is certainly an additional object of interest, and no insignificant one either in the spot where he is a dweller. . . . And is not his appearance 'picturesque?' Look at the venerable grey locks floating from under his low broad hat, with the wild flowers and albatross feather stuck in its ample, but tarnished riband;—and see the greaves or leggings of seal-skin the old man wears, tied with tags of blue cloth, by way of variety to his sailor's dress."

"He appears a study, at any rate, for genius to depict, either that of poet or painter," said Renmore.

"Ay, and is a genius, a poet, and painter, too, himself! . . . He will tell you marvellous tales of the voyage he took to 'the icy sea' once that will make your blood run as cold as if you were hemmed in amongst the icebergs themselves."

"Indeed! I should like much to hear a specimen one of these days of his powers." "Well, here he is—mark him well. There is a sorrow about his brow that you may imagine Dante's wore, according to the portraits of him, which all exhibit his countenance as though woe-begone from the fearful scenes of which he had sung, and through which you might almost imagine he had passed. The poet looks scathed as it were with the flames he has depicted. . . But here is our 'ancient mariner!'—Good morrow, Mike! are you bound for Keswick, or 'whitheraway' do you wend?" asked the geologist.

"I was making for Keswick, as your honour supposes," replied the old "weird" man; and then looking at Renmore, he paused for a moment with his eye intent on his countenance, while he started involuntarily as if he had known or recognised him, from having previously seen him. Renmore, on his part, shrunk back from his scrutiny.

—He had seen Mike before, and did not like to remember when.

"Have you any news, Mike?" asked the geologist; "we want you to tell us one of your stories. Here is a gentleman, a stranger in the country here, whom I have been apprising of your renown for legendary lore, and the perils you have encountered."

"Mayhap he has encountered perils too himself!" said the old man, turning his keen grey eye on our hero with a look of significance. "No," he continued, after a pause, "I know no news but a report that the famous forger and impostor Hatfield is lurking somewhere about the district."

"Indeed! I should like just for once to see that individual," said the geologist; "I am told he is a very clever fellow and a most gentleman-like and well-informed man. Have you not heard so?" he added to Renmore.

"Yes indeed, I have !" replied the Colonel, but I understood that he had been known to have escaped from this district at Ravenglass some time ago," he added, looking at Mike with an air of inquiry, either pretended or real.

"Yes, that he did!" answered Mike, "and I know it too! for a certain gentleman I conveyed in my little sloop lying there I found out afterwards was the very man. Lord, what rewards they offered for taking him! I should know him again amongst a thousand."

"Would you betray him," asked Renmore, "should you chance to fall in with him?" in a somewhat lowered tone in the old man's ear.

"I betray him? not I! I'm not the man to profit by any such 'sneaking trick;' I think him too clever a fellow, for my part, not to wish he may escape after all."

"Well said, Mike! that is worthy your honest

heart, and worthy the heart of a British sailor," said the geologist.

" It is indeed a Christian-like feeling," observed Renmore, " but in this state of society, where man is so much a 'wolf to man,' it is not often cherished;" and as he spoke his lip transiently quivered under the emotion, of which, for some cause or other, he was sensible, and which he found it difficult altogether to subdue. In saying this, he looked again at old Mike with a look of half mistrust, which soon however vanished for one of cheerfulness and confidence as the keen hawk's eye of the "weird mariner" altered its regard of dangerous significance for one of more benevolent meaning; while the Colonel at this moment finding his path was in a different direction from that which his late companion, the geologist, was proceeding upon towards Keswick, he took this opportunity of bidding him good morning as he left him and Mike to pursue their way together.

The singularity of character, in different ways, of both these persons, however, had made sufficient impression on Renmore's mind to induce him to cast one backward glance at them, after he had proceeded a short distance on his way. The favourable impression he had received of the benevolence of the geologist's character was now augmented by his witnessing him performing an almost filial act

of kindness to the old mariner, by supporting him with his arm, besides carrying his bundle for him. At the same time, his attention appeared absorbed in some "tale of wonder" which he had solicited of Mike. He continued gazing at the "group," as a painter would say, when, with the natural suggestion whispered by individual apprehension, and that consciousness, it may be, of crime, by which we have already witnessed him haunted, he exclaimed to himself, "What can be the topic on which the old man seems to expatiate so earnestly, to judge by the gestures he uses? I wonder whether he can be speaking of me? . . . Yet, no; I do not think he would say anything-but I am encompassed with danger, and haunted by that worst of alarm, Uncertainty, and may reasonably dread every one I encounter!" . . . Well, indeed, might he say so, undaunted and enterprising naturally as he notwithstanding was. He had proceeded on his way a little further, when, on again looking back, he now witnessed the geologist pursuing his path alone, while Mike had taken another direction. He had not, however, gone very much further before his surprise was awakened by seeing the "ancient mariner" in his path, into which, it should seem, the old man had turned, from an avenue formed by a cleft in the hill, which had hitherto escaped his attention.

"I have returned to tell you, Sir," said Mike,
"(and don't wish to ask you how far you may be interested or not in the matter,)—that there is a
reward' offered for the apprehension of that same
'Hatfield' in this very district, as near, indeed, as at Keswick. So," he added, in a lowered and more wary tone, "if he should be in the way, it were well he were on his guard!"

"And no doubt," answered Renmore, "he would thank you sincerely, were he present, for your amity and well-meant caution. So the blood-hounds, it appears, are fast in their pursuit after him! And who is the leader of the pack that is on the scent for him in this district, after all the doublings of the chase?"

"As usual, where the cover is deepest, the game is suspected to lie; and in these lonely wilds is the quarry searched for. As for the pursuer—a public spy and blood-thirster can borrow no better guise than that of Religion to mask his real purpose—to veil the character at once and object of his presence."

"Under the guise of religion! I known o such...
that is ..." said Renmore, hesitatingly, "I wonder ... I mean to observe, that justice is much
obliged to such an adroit and cunning myrmidon?
But," he continued, trying to assume a carelessness,
oreven jocularity of tone, "do you think the 'quarry'

will escape after all? You have, I hear," he added, smiling, "the reputation of being somewhat of a soothsayer."

The old man shook his head as the grey locks waved solemnly over his brow, and looked at Renmore with a countenance that little reciprocated the forced jocularity he detected. On the contrary, his look bespoke sorrow, deeply mingled with the scrutiny of that regard which he bent on his companion. Even the constitutional, no less than habitual, firmness of the latter was shaken by that look of fearful significance and sorrowful feeling as he observed—

"You turn your eye very fixedly on me. Do you see anything in my countenance that augurs misfortune?" and he again attempted to smile as he spoke.

"Did I ever see a smile on the lip, with which the upper part of the face agrees not in expression, that I did not know it to be feigned* and forced?—to be the disguise of a mind ill at ease, and of a sick spirit?" replied Mike, with the same solemn significance, and which, indeed, generally characterized his tone. "The mind," he continued, "looks through the eyes; and the brow should smile in unison with the lip to shew the joy sincere."

^{*} This was uniformly remarked of Napoleon's smile.

"You are quite a physiognomist, my good old man!"

"I would I were not!" replied the weird-mariner, still fixing his regard with the same expression as before on his companion, who now contemplated him with the tacit dread a man might be supposed to feel in communing with an evil spirit, however much he might endeavour to rouse up fortitude for the interview.

"Why," asked Renmore again, "do you look so intently, and sorrowfully too, on me?"

"Do not ask me why," said the old man; "the day will come which must prove me right," and he made a movement as if to leave his companion and strike into another path which here presented itself, muttering at the same time words, the import of which did not reach Renmore's ear.

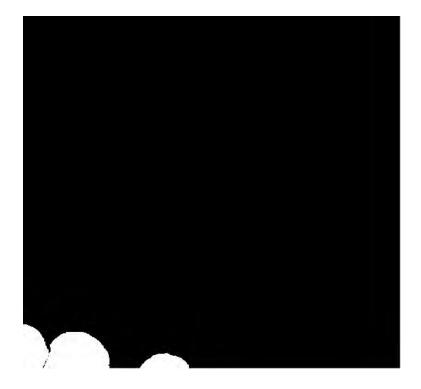
"Nay, nay; don't leave me so abruptly," cried the latter; "I must know what it is that so arrests your attention,—that passes in your mind, as you bend your eyes so significantly on me."

"Do not, do not stay me," said the old man, with an expression of mingled dread and anxiety, while he shrunk from Renmore, who yet endeavoured to retain him with his hand; "why will you hold me back?"

"I must—I will hear! . . . I beg of you," said Renmore, anxiously.

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"Why force me to make you miserable? I will not utter it aloud. . . . If you will hear it, then, advance your ear here." He bent his aged head towards Renmore, and whispered words that shot like an ice-bolt to his heart. In vain did he endeavour to rally at the moment; he was for some little time bewildered in surprise no less than dismay, and when he came to himself again, and looked round for the old wizard (for so Mike was not unreasonably deemed) he was gone.



CHAPTER VIII.

"When I reach the door,
If heavy looks should meet me?"

COLERIDGE.

AGITATED, confounded, and with increased feelings of doubt and anxiety, Renmore pursued his way back to his "hiding-place," it may be called, rather than abode. Happy would he have been if he could have felt that the spot of his present sojourn might indeed prove a hiding-place for him; but Mike's communication forbade him to be thus confident. The thought of the "blood-hounds" being on his track haunted him at every turn; and with hesitating footsteps he retraced his way homeward, through rugged and devious paths, now overhanging the borders of the meer, now winding in covert mazes along the slope of the crag, sheltered by the impending rock-brow on one side, and on the other by the thick tangled briar and heath. As he stole along by this rugged path, he was suddenly startled by a noise, which, however, turned out to be but the hurried rustling of the stray sheep that grazed on the mountain turf-slope, and whose repose under the bushes, whither they had strayed for shelter from the heat, was disturbed by his approach; meantime the shepherd loiterer that he now saw, as the sheep-walk widened and the hill presented a more open scope for grazing, was even eyed by him, at first, with suspicion.

The little inn at length appeared in sight. Its neat though homely aspect looked all content, and peace, and retirement-joy to the wayfarer, and promise of rest and recruital . . . but not so to him. "Rest and repose," he thought, "are not permitted me through the wide world; for where dare I hope or look for security? The glimpse of happiness I caught in Gertrude's presence, how vainly was it cherished! Who can it be that is thus haunting my path? And can he, then, be so near the spot of my retreat? Perhaps even now the ambush is laid for me!" . . . With these thoughts, naturally suggested as they were by his peculiarly hazardous situation, without any disparagement to that spirit of boldness and enterprise that we shall hereafter witness as characterizing him, Renmore arrived at the Traveller's Rest.

He gained access to the house by a back entrance, that led into the garden across a little rustic bridge thrown over the brook; and if he had escaped the notice of any one in his passage hither, his alarm was justly destined to be aroused again by witnessing what was an unusual and at once unaccountable circumstance, namely, the presence of both Gertrude and Mrs. Wetherby advancing to meet him, as if apparently they had been looking out for his return home! As Gertrude approached him, he thought to himself-" Perhaps there is danger near, and she is coming to warn me, in her benevolence, from the spot . . . but no; there is her mother also with her, whom I can scarcely consider of a disposition so charitable, despite her religious propensities. No; they are possibly coming to tell me that I am a prisonerthat I am discovered-that I am known-that the myrmidons of justice are within these walls, and that my way is beset-my path surrounded-that escape is vain !- Or, yet more, Gertrude, taught now to mistrust my character, and loathing my presence, is come to betray, to decoy me, into their hands! Well, death will be sweet if I am led to it by the hand of such and so dear an executioner." . . . And having now come close up to the Beauty, he inquired, with as much composure as he was able to assume under his present causes of inquietude, "How it happened that herself and his hostess had done him the honour of coming out to meet him? Had they been waiting for him?-looking out for

him?...Yes," he thought to himself, "they must have been; or how should it occur to them to look for my return to the house in this direction, rather than by the regular entrance. If, then, they have been looking out for me, on what account can it be?"

Such were his tacit communings as he awaited their reply. Mrs. Wetherby, being a person of much less observation than her more lively and intelligent daughter, did not take any notice of the transient change of Renmore's countenance, that involuntarily exhibited itself. Notwithstanding his talent at disguising his thoughts and subduing his feelings, the forced constraint of his manner, at the present anxious moment, as he endeavoured to veil his real apprehensions, did not altogether escape Gertrude. Far, however, was she from imagining its true cause, and the transient paleness on his brow she imputed merely to fatigue; nay, so speedily did he regain his wonted composure, that any eye that had regarded him less heedfully than her own, (because, let it be confessed, with less interest,) would not have perceived any inquietude. Meantime, Mrs. Wetherby explained as follows the cause of herself and her daughter thus "coming forth" to meet their distinguished guest on his earliest return :-

"Oh, Sir! there have been such a number of folks after you," she exclaimed, in a "sing-song" key, "during your absence." "What for? what for?" interrupted Renmore, involuntarily, "and what folks, pray?"

"Oh! only 'gentlefolks' to call on you, Sir, as you will see by the cards they have left; and I was directed to say, with compliments, that should you think proper to dine at Mr. Lawton's, at Blacktarn, or at Mr. Howbiggen's, on the meerside, close by, those gentlemen would be much honoured by your company. I thought, Sir," she continued, curtseying, "I would lose no time in letting you know what they said, in case you might like to dine out; and so myself and Gertrude have therefore watched your return home, to know your pleasure, Sir."

If the stone which Sisyphus was condemned to roll up the steep had been suddenly taken from his hands, he could not have felt more relieved than Renmore now felt, in being eased of the burden that had weighed on his heart. He was instantly "himself again;" and the colour that had transiently wavered in his cheek now returned to it, and every symptom of the uneasiness he had tacitly struggled to subdue was banished in the smile that now accompanied his words as he spoke. Gertrude forgot at once that anything in his manner had challenged, however momentarily, her notice.

"I am much flattered by the attention of the people in the neighbourhood, indeed, Mrs. Wetherby," he replied, "and shall certainly not permit their courtesy to remain long unacknowledged; but I am to-day a little too fatigued to avail myself of their kindness, however much pleasure it might afford me."

"Then you'll please to dine at home to-day, Sir?" interrupted the careful landlady; this being a point, it is needless to say, which it is of paramount importance to all worthies, male or female, of her calling to settle.

Her guest replied by an inclination of the head, little heeding the subject of her peculiar interest, as he proceeded, after a pause and with some abruptness—"And pray is Mr. Fenton (I mean the clergyman of Lorton,—a few miles off) much a guest in the neighbourhood here? I should perhaps have met him had I gone out to dine to-day."

"I really am unable to say whether that is likely or not," replied dame Wetherby, with more than her usual stiffness. "He is a very retired gentleman," she added, "and does not, I believe, enter much into society."

"But he is not the less beloved, Sir, on account of his habits of retirement," interposed Gertrude, taking up her mother's words; "and you will no doubt meet him, should you dine out on Sunday. . . . No; next Sunday week it is, that he comes over to preach here in behalf of the Charity School." . . .

But the Beauty's words were here checked by the cloudy look of dissent which met her in her mother's countenance, while Renmore, perceiving it, turned the subject of his remarks in a different direction. It readily occurred to him that the proselyte of the dissenting "holder forth," Quandish, did not hear too complacently her daughter's good word in vindication of the Curate of Lorton.

"Ah, then, I shall see him, I dare say, next Sunday," said Renmore, hastily. "Thank you! thank you! . . . And so," he continued, with a smile of good-humoured irony, "I am indebted, I suppose, to the kind attention of Dr. Esdaile for the courtesies heaped on me during my absence on my rambles this day!"

"I dare say such is the case, Sir," replied the "widow Wetherby," her countenance somewhat cheered by the mention of a person more in her good graces than any other in the neighbourhood, always excepting the preacher Quandish. "A nice good-humoured gentleman is Dr. Esdaile. . . . But what time did you say you would be pleased to dine, Sir?"

"Oh, any time—an hour hence;" and here, as dame Wetherby withdrew, with a curtsey and a "Very well, Sir," Renmore continued his remarks, with his accustomed easy cheerfulness, to her more engaging daughter, as he walked towards the house across the garden by the Beauty's side. "So you see, my fair Gertrude, the good people of the neighbourhood seem determined on not permitting me to lead the hermit's life of seclusion which I had proposed to myself on coming to these wilds!" (while he added to himself, "thanks to the officiousness of that troublesome little char-fishing Doctor.")

"Nay, Sir," replied the Beauty, with her usual becoming archness, "it is in them a compliment paid to you, that they should seek you"——

["Oh, no doubt!" he interposed, smiling.]

"For surely, Sir, if they did not, it should seem as though they considered you one of those listless and shy members of society that should be worthily left to themselves, and that"——

"Were no very great compliment, you would say. Well, but how do you know, that after all, they may not be mistaken in me? I declare (and here he spoke truly enough) there is no being in the world, however shy or listless, as you say, Gertrude, that would be more enamoured of solitude than myself just at present! . . And why should I wish," he added, while she looked up in his face with an air of inquiry, "for the companionship of others,

when I am sufficiently happy in that which I hope, now and then, to snatch in your own presence?"

The blush played on Gertrude's check in recognition of the not ungraceful turn Renmore's excuse had adopted; and she was about to reply, when the presence of dame Wetherby, summoning her assistance in the preparatory arrangements for their guest's repast, checked her words; and as she now withdrew, Renmore found himself once more alone.

He entered the same little room in which he had passed the preceding evening with Esdaile, and having closed the door hastily, "Thank heaven! thank heaven!" he exclaimed, "they have, at any rate, not yet hunted me out of my hiding-place. Oh! miserable situation, that I should have actually dreaded, on my return to this my skulking-haunt, meeting the being I really love, this bewitching girl here, for fear lest she too, with the rest of the world, should be seeking to betray me! Thrice-miserable, degrading, and fearful lot !-- wretched, guilt-haunted man! . . . And is there no escape? . . . Is it only for a brief illusory interval I am at large, and stretch these limbs, unshackled and at liberty? Distressful, degrading thought! . . . And yet I must deem such to be my lot, if I am to give credence to the whisper of that fearful old man, or wizard let me call him. . . . My tale is, however,

safe with him; nay, he knows more of me than I know myself, it should seem. And if what he warns me against must, as in all probability it will, be my destiny, why, whether I stay here or attempt to fly is one and the same thing. Sooner or later, it appears, the evil doom must be met and fulfilled. . . . What then? Am I lost? . . . I, who have braved such dangers and difficulties, and have escaped thus far-am I to be nerveless, tame, helpless, under a superstitious fear? Pshaw! . . . And vet," he continued, after a pause, "though I am ready to spurn all such weakness, yet I know not why-there is a bitter presentiment in my mind that what the old man told me will prove itself too true. . . . Besides, the course of all probabilities is in favour of its verification. The wild story of my infant day . . . the strange destinies that marked it. . . . Yet why," he continued, hurriedly, " must I believe they are to end in the fatal issue of which he warns me? . . . There may yet be escape! Courage, resolution, defiance of fate, may yet bear me through, as they hitherto have done !"

But just here dame Wetherby broke in upon her guest's private communings; and herself and Gertrude assisted in placing dinner on table. The subject of his reflections, if it regarded any apprehensions as to future perils, of which the ancient mariner had warned him, seemed no less also to be occupied on some singular disclosure concerning his earlier and infant history. The circumstances of such disclosure, whatever they might be, baffled the reach of his own remembrance, and for the character of which we must one day look to Mike himself for explanation.

Thus, then, swayed between apprehensions and hopes for the future, and anxious considerations as to the far past—in which the thought of "the good Fenton" mingled, nor all unrecognised by the tear that would furtively steal forth,—thus swayed by tenderer feelings at one moment, and at another, roused by the sterner thoughts that bade defiance to fate, and summoned up his natural resolution to his aid—Renmore's turbid day waned.

CHAPTER IX.

" Un medecin politique et flatteur."

MOLIERE.

And now to retrace our steps to the banks of the meer, or those of the char-stream that runs sparkling from the steeps of Melbreak, in order to join once again our friend Dr. Esdaile. We had left him with his dog Bryan proceeding on his favourite pursuit, until the hour should warn him that it was time to visit his patient Mr. Howbiggen, whose residence, we have already heard him inform our hero, was situate on the borders of the meer. It was at the distance of a quarter of an hour's walk from the village of Buttermere, and had been taken for a short period, by its present occupants for purposes of health. The Doctor, then, having at length stored his landing-net with a sufficient tribute of the "precious prey," as a present for his patient's

sister, that estimable spinster, Miss Howbiggen, had found his way to their residence, and by this time had made the sounds of his merry chattering audible within its walls. We may say of the goodhumoured, though somewhat bustling, Doctor, that he was a favourite with all who knew him; and, indeed, if any proof were wanting of this circumstance, we are afforded it in the fact of his having been witnessed as in the good graces of even the demure widow Wetherby herself! If he was popular for the good-humour that characterized his social qualities, he was certainly not less so for his attributes as a professor of the healing art; and we doubt whether any disciple of Esculapius, Galen, Hippocrates, Avicenna, and " Co.," ever won more golden opinions, and we trust we may add, golden remunerations! It will be subject of little surprise that such should be the case when we state, in addition to the testimony recorded of "the golden opinions and golden remunerations," which were the Doctor's guerdon, the "golden rules" also by which he sought health for his patients; and if at times he failed in this paramount object, he at least seldom failed in securing the not unimportant one of popularity by his principle of treatment.

In a word, our obliging and epicurean M.D. always took care, as far as the case would admit,

to indulge the tastes of his patients, by which he proved himself no less a politician and philosopher in his art, than a physician. To flatter self-love and accommodate himself (as far as it was expedient for him to do so) to the inclinations, appetites, and whims even, of his valetudinarian catalogue, was always the principle of Dr. Esdaile in "dieting" his patients, and prescribing a "regimen" for them. Accordingly, the first "great rule" in his "Code de Santé," or "golden list," was—

1st. Always cat or drink what you find you like; for the circumstance of your liking a thing is itself a proof it agrees with you! Such is the law of Nature, that directs all animals to find nourishment in that which they chiefly like.

Not the least amusing feature of our sage's logic is the grave deduction made in it from "premises" so questionable. Now, though many exceptions may be taken to the above proposition as a general one, we may at least say it is a more palatable one, at any rate, than the water-drinking doctrine of Sangrado; and this gentleman's renown (it cannot be questioned) was as great as that of any professor of the healing art that ever "cured or—killed" mortal man. Leaving it therefore to schoolboys amongst others, whose propensity for plumcake at Christmas has made them suffer, to say how far our philosophic Doctor was right

in this his first proposition, we will, with similar brevity, record his second, which is accordingly as follows:—

2nd. Always breakfast as if you did not intend to have any "mid-day refection;" recruit yourself at mid-day as if you had never breakfasted, nor intended to dine; and dine, as if you were unconscious of having perpetrated the trivial interlude of the said "mid-day refection." "Because," adds our profound physician, "the circumstance of the appetite being hearty is a sure sign and proof of the health being good."

There is again no gainsaying this "conclusion" at least, whatever we may say to the "premises;" so we shall at once proceed to the third, which deals at once in "philosophy profound," and declares, with an almost oracular solemnity—

3rd. That there can be no health of mind without health of body; therefore, parents, look to your progeny's health and strength well before you ply their minds with too much instruction. Lay a foundation of health first, if you are ambitious of hereafter witnessing strong mental powers. And ye, the vapour-be-fogged, nervously-worried, dyspeptic, phantom-haunted, moping, night-mare-ridden, and sleep-forbidden amongst my patients, let me "administer to your minds diseased" through the channel and medium of your bodily

frames first of all, ere health, with its joy, its elasticity, and light, can visit you.

In these "golden rules," as it pleased their propounder himself to term them, rested the secret of all the Doctor's art as a healer of mortal maladies, and, we may add, of all his popularity too; and having thus necessarily confided to the reader the principles of this great man's treatment, (Nota Bene-we will not call him "quack,") we are at liberty now safely to conduct him into the presence of the Doctor's patient, Mr. Howbiggen. The pulse-feeling ceremonial was now being gone through between the Doctor and the valetudinarian. The latter, we should premise, was a difficult subject to treat, however "cunning" might be the "leech" that administered to him; for, despite the Doctor's popularity, Mr. Howbiggen was one of those morose gentlemen that seem systematically to determine on being pleased with nobody and nothing,-who, in consequence of some early check in views of ambition or gain, (or be it what it may,) are self-abandoned to gloom and discontent, and universal captionsness!

Such was the case with Mr. Howbiggen, as we shall more fully glean by-and-by from himself, whose fretfulness of spirit had at last preyed so much on his frame that it had induced a corporeal malady congenial with that of his mind.

In order to recruit his strength he had repaired from the metropolis, where he generally resided. to the spot where we find him, at the instigation of his maiden sister, who condescendingly managed for him his domestic economy. This lady, who, though she doubtless had (as we all have) her "amiable failings," yet exercised much forbearance and kindness in putting up with the systematic grumbling and asceticism of her cynical brother, to whose dissociability she contrasted qualities perhaps even in the opposite extreme, her taste being very much that of living in a whirl of society, and "going out" as much as possible. With this she combined, however, much kindness of disposition and hospitality. Dr. Esdaile, in his somewhat blunt way, and being always partial to calling things "by their right names," would designate those little importunities she sometimes exhibited by the plain terms of even "gadding and gossiping." Such terms, if they certainly were not altogether inappropriate to the homely style in which the "rude folk" of the village would sometimes comment on Miss Hester Howbiggen, yet no doubt were a nomenclature that would be little pleasing to so august a lady as herself, could it have reached her polite ears. Looking forward, then, shortly to the felicity of introducing ourselves to this amiable person, our attention is at present directed towards witnessing with what philosophic

amiability the good-humoured Doctor parried the contradictory and ascetic style it was the "sour satisfaction" of his patient to exhibit. This worthy was found by his medical adviser seated in a huge arm-chair by the fire-side, even at that fine season of the year, for it was June. His head was covered with a snuff-coloured wig; a double-breasted buff waistcoat protected his chest, surmounted by a neckcloth of copious folds, twisted tightly round the neck, according to the ungainly fashion of the day. His knees were drawn up, and his feet rested on the fender. A newspaper divided his attention with a tumbler of spiced wine with a toast in it.

"And how are we to-day?" exclaimed Dr. Esdaile, as he duly proceeded to feel the pulse of his patient.

"How should we be?" answered Mr. Howbiggen, in a growling tone, not exhibiting by his manner or aspect that he at all entered into the good-humoured vein of the lively physician; "how should we be, when there is no reason on earth for being any better?"

"Reason!" replied Esdaile, nothing repulsed; "why now, I think there is reason. The pulse is far more regular; . . . the regimen has had the most desirable effects. How should it not, when it consisted of just precisely what was most agreeable to you? You will not quarrel, I hope, with a dish of char to-day, by way of variety? and (let me

see) a leveret and a little asparagus will not be amiss; and the East India Madeira—three, four, five—ay, half-a-dozen glasses—may be continued."

"Ugh, all this may be very well in itself," growled the patient, reluctantly acknowledging within himself that he was soothed somewhat by having his tastes so indulgently studied; "but," he added, determining not to evince any such weakness, "I don't at all see how it is to make me well."

"Then I am happy to say that I do," exclaimed the Doctor, in a tone of merry triumph. "What! is it your health of spirits, your cheerfulness of mind, you would see restored, for this is what you ask me to do chiefly for you? And do I not do so?"—

"No, no, no," interposed the patient, shaking his head sceptically.

"Do I not do so, I say, in telling you, my dear Sir, though with all deference, that ambition, in whose objects you may have been foiled, is all a dream, a mere dream, and not worth your fretting over?—that even in its success, the attainment of happiness is very uncertain and fallacious! While I, on the other hand, put content—ay, enjoyment—positively in your possession, by my mode of treatment!" (The ascetic curled up his lip with a sardonic grin.) "For, mark my words, as we

grow older, the study of our appetites," he continued, with emphasis, "is after all an object of chief importance, and one which we are able most duly to appreciate. As our physical powers flag and fail, the support-the agreeable supportafforded their decay and debility is a gratification positive and undeniable !-- a main source of contentment in this wane of life, when all the pursuits of vanity are viewed in their true colours, and recognised as fleeting and shadowy! Here I give you, then, by my 'system,' which I must say," he modestly added, "I never knew fail," - (" Ugh! ugh !" chuckled the cynic, turning himself restlessly in his chair,)-"a certain source of satisfaction, and that, too, which your time of life is best capable of appreciating! And I am happy to say," continued the epicurean Doctor, in a renewed tone of jocular triumph, "I can witness the best effects from my treatment! Depend upon it, we must set up, according to the plan I am pursuing, the physical powers first of all, and then the health of mind too will follow as a happy consequence on their restitution !"

"Have you done?" growled Mr. Howbiggen with characteristic complacence; "have you done putting the cart before the horse,' as usual?"

But this sally, sour as was its tone, was not perne the lips of his patient without being turned to account by the facetious Doctor, as he interposed, "Capital! delightful!—this is precisely the cheerful vein of remark I wish to induce! Be assured, my dear Mr. Howbiggen, that the 'regimen' succeeds wondrously! Take my word for it that the nerves of the brain . . ."

"Pooh! pshaw! I know all you have to say about the affection of the nerves of the brain, resulting in an affection also of the mind; and that on the health, again, of the one depends that of the other. I know all this! I know what you have to say — I have heard this 'jargon'" (the Doctor smiled) "over and over again!—this crambe repetita of your 'system,' but . . ."

Doctor, rising in his tone of good-humoured banter in proportion as his patient was impatient and surly. "This mirthful vein of remark proves you all the while better; and that the regimen has done wond . . ."

"Nothing, I tell you! In fact, you do but waste breath in trying to convince me that I am better and better, when I am myself too conscious that the cause of my malady still exists! What matters it that you tell me, it is an unworthy cause, and originating in a vain and fallacious dream? What, I say, matters that, if the cause, nevertheless, exists, and the ill effects of it remain?

Pshaw! You may talk of 'correcting the physical habit' and so forth, but I tell you again, you do but put the 'cart before the horse;' for I suppose you're aware" (he continued, curling up his lip with a sneer, while the Doctor smiled self-complacently) "that the mind you treat as such a secondary thing,-that the mind, in its disease, pulls awry the body; and in doing so, mocks at all your efforts to set right the 'physical tone' (as you express it) or anything connected with this miserable thing of clay, the body!" And the cynic turned away impatiently, while his medical adviser did but continue smiling as he exclaimed, with undiminished glee-" Why this is better and better! Rail at my system as long as you please in words, if you do but prove that in effect it is right and beneficial! Why, you could no more have descanted in this good-humoured, pleasant, light, easy style, on this or any other subject, a short time past, than you could have flown!"

"Pshaw! nonsense, Dr. Esdaile! What matters it, I tell you, that I am a little better at times—just now and then?—make me permanently so if you can! You might as well pretend to do so as to give me back the ten thousand pounds I lost at the election some years back, and the seat in parliament with it for my pains—ugh, ugh—and the sacrifice of all my projects in public life—pshaw!

You might as well pretend to do one as the other. . . . So pray talk no more of your 'system,' for Heaven's sake !" . . . And he again turned away from the wilfully-incredulous Doctor, with a look of contempt and half-anger at the complacency with which the other maintained the merits of his " material system." In fact, in their principles of difference both may be said to be right to a certain extent; and that both were wrong in the partial view each took of the subject is no less certain. The only answer which Mr. Howbiggen again received was in the same confident strain of unalloyed good-humour as before - " Better and better! You are, I am convinced, much better;" and just here the door was opened, and that estimable elderly maiden-lady, Miss Howbiggen, made her appearance as Esdaile turned round, and bowed to her, while he continued, addressing her with reference to his patient, "I am happy, Miss Howbiggen, to be able to pronounce that there is vast improvement in our patient, in spite of his own unwillingness to acknowledge it! . . . Pulse better . . . tongue clearer . . . complexion brighter . . . eye more sprightly . . . conversation cheerful . . . cheerful in the extreme! . . . And yet he would quarrel with my system! . . . Never found him so cheerful!

"Well, I'm heartily glad," replied the fair

spinster, with a toss of the head, indicative in some measure of incredulity, if not reproach, towards her cynical brother, "that you have brought him round at last. For my part, I always tell him that he will never be better till he lives less by himself -sees more people-indulges more in the pleasures of social life-and rubs off the rust acquired by this perpetual brooding over the train of his own fretful associations! Yes-rubs it off, I say," (she proceeded, looking at the ascetic, whose lip was curled up in contempt at these indirect admonitions,) "by some interchange of opinions-some intercourse with mankind-and, let me add, some little deference to the tastes and inclinations of others. Ah, brother !" she added, in a somewhat softened tone, "if you could but take the advice I have so often given you, and permitted yourself to be guided by the example of my more social disposition, you would have been a better and a happier man! You would not only have secured cheerfulness for yourself, but contributed to that of the circle around you!"

So far Miss Howbiggen spoke truly; for her brother, ascetic as he had become by habit, had naturally no want of either social feelings or even conviviality of disposition. In fact, in times past his humour and liveliness in conversation had made him much sought after, and the flattery of which he was sensible on the score of his talent in this particular had perhaps been the first inducement to his enlarging the scope of his ambition by entering on the career of public life, in which he had been disappointed, and had hence lost his original gaiety, having been taught a lesson he had too little philosophy to endure with patience.

Dr. Esdaile exclaimed, as Miss Howbiggen concluded her remarks, that his "regimen" would yet effect everything towards their patient's restoration that was desirable, while that gentleman himself replied to her—

"Ugh, well, then; as I cannot be cheerful, it is better to stay out of the way of people, and keep my unpleasant qualities to myself, rather than mar the happiness of others by souring the more cheerful vein of their thoughts and feelings by my presence—inauspicious as it is." Then turning to Dr. Esdaile, he proceeded, "She is always trying to drag me into what she calls society! This is all she cares about! As for whether I'm well or ill, it is a matter of little consequence!"

Dr. Esdaile laughed, while his sister exclaimed in good-humoured reproach—

"Here's ingratitude, Dr. Esdaile!—this is the way in which he distorts everything that I say, and takes everything by the wrong handle!" "Oh! this is merely joking!" exclaimed the bantering Doctor; "this is merely facetiousness on Mr. Howbiggen's part. I assure you, I never found him so improved, so cheerful. I told you we should bring him round—correct the nervous system—restore the physical powers to their right tone—and the result is, 'mens sana in corpore sano'!"

"Pshaw! 'corpore sano!' let us hear no more, Doctor, of your 'system' to-day, if you please"—

"Well, then!" interposed Miss Howbiggen, "if you are sceptical as to Dr. Esdaile's power of curing you, embrace, my dear brother, 'my system,' socially delightful as it is; for this peculiarly agrees with all your arguments that first of all the mind . . ."

"'A plague o' both your houses,' as says Mercutio!" growled out Mr. Howbiggen, hastily cutting short this attempt on the part of his sister at trepanning him into dining out and card-parties, "So I may say, a plague o' both your systems! You neither of you can give me back either my ten thousand pounds or restore my lost opportunities! so prate no more about your systems. The twaddle of evening parties or dull dinners would relieve the mind amazingly!" (he added, with a sardonic grin,) "About as much as my

friend Dr. Esdaile's 'regimen'—pooh! pshaw!—my good sister, do not talk about what you don't understand any longer, but leave me to myself."

Dr. Esdaile made little reply to this sweeping censure, but laughed, declaring again "that his system would triumph over all others!" while Miss Howbiggen pronounced her brother "incorrigible," and said that "he only opposed her from the mere love of contradiction," and was forthwith proceeding to take her leave and resume the walk in the grounds round the house which she had been taking when Dr. Esdaile's arrival had called her in doors; but it so happened that she was delayed by the Doctor's starting a subject too engrossing not to engage her attention and arrest her steps.

"You will be happy to hear, since we were speaking of society," (said the little man, grinning with the consciousness of imparting a piece of news that would be particularly acceptable to her of all persons)—"that there is an accession to the social circle in the neighbourhood; a most desirable one too!" and here he opened his eyes, as having delivered an important, no less than agreeable piece of intelligence; while the fair person to whom he imparted it reciprocally distended her lids with surprise no less than pleasure.

"I'm delighted! our circle was so small!-do let us hear the name!" exclaimed the sociable and society-loving lady, at the same moment that her ascetic brother growled out—"Oh, good gracious! we've 'bores' enough already, without any more!"

Meantime, "the herald of good news," as Miss Howbiggen considered him, proceeded—

"Why, he is no less a person than a certain colonel, of noble family, and a member of parliament to boot!"

"Ugh, a colonel in the army," growled Howbiggen; "that is no great recommendation, when we hear so much of the partial sale of commissions, and promotions by favour of young aristocratic coxcombs, to the exclusion often of the most deserving. Ugh—a member of parliament, too! ugh that is a title guaranteeing anything but honesty now-a-days!"

Miss Howbiggen, on the other hand, exclaimed, with very different feelings and in a very different strain—

- "Delightful! A member of parliament!—and his name?—his name?"
 - " Colonel Renmore."
 - " Charming name!"
- "Nothing very charming that I can see," muttered her ascetic brother;—" what a fuss you make about any strange person that happens to come into the neighbourhood, and perhaps may merely be passing through it. Why you can possibly require

to increase your circle (as you call it) I can't imagine! I'm sure I don't wish to see this colonel —(what do you call him?) any more than he wishes (I dare say) to see me!"

"And I'm dying to see him!" exclaimed Miss Howbiggen. "Our 'circle' at present is 'no circle at all.' As for Mr. Lawton, the 'squire,' as the country people here call him, he is a very worthy"...

. . . "Oh, the 'bore' of a fellow! do not name him," growled out her brother, hastily.

"Nay, indeed he is a very worthy person, but certainly not so all-engrossing as to leave no accession to his society to be wished for. He is almost the only person we have in the neighbourhood, except your 'Genii of the Lake,' Dr. Esdaile; and these are such sublime philosophical persons that they are sometimes a little too lofty to answer the notions of companionship that humbler spirits find more agreeable! . . . Oh! I'm delighted to think we shall have so desirable and distinguished an accession. . . . Pray when did you first see him?"

"Oh, only yesterday evening. I took leave of him this morning and promised to call on him again shortly," replied the Doctor.

"Charming! do make it in your way to look in upon him if you should be able, and express how much pleasure it would give Mr. Howbiggen and myself if he would favour us with his company to dinner this evening."

Esdaile hesitated for a moment in his reply, calling now to mind, as he did, a little too late, the circumstance of Renmore's appearing to desire to be private.

"Why, what is the matter?" continued the fair spinster, with a tone of eager inquisitiveness; "he surely will scarcely refuse us the pleasure of his company, being a stranger and all alone?"

"That is very true," replied the Doctor, still hesitating; "but I fancy he is a little occupied at present by an arrear of correspondence to constituents and others."

"Oh! dear, dear! that can hardly be. A man must find time to dine, and 'see society.' There is a time surely for all things. I, for my part, could write letters to as many people as any M.P. in the three kingdoms has constituents, and yet find time for seeing my friends and entering into the engagements of 'society!'"

"But this person is no friend of yours or mine, nor knows anything about us!" growled out Howbiggen; "and perhaps does not wish to know anything about us!"

"The greater is the compliment we pay him, then, in shewing him the courtesy of making advances towards his acquaintance, and offering him hospitality as being a stranger amongst us!" retorted Miss Howbiggen, with a truly becoming toss of the head at her brother's barbarous 'antisocial' tone of thinking.

"Well, all I can say is," resumed Dr. Esdaile, "that if I thought that by returning to the place where he is taking up his abode during his stay here, I could induce him to join me and accept your invitation I should be too happy; but really, I think he would only consider it an interference, after the assurance he gave me that to-day, at least, he was too much engaged to be at liberty to come out. Perhaps to-morrow, or on some future day, he may be less occupied."

"There! now will not that satisfy you?" growled out Howbiggen again. "I'm sure I am in no such hurry to see this 'distinguished stranger'—he, he, he!" he added, chuckling most provokingly.

Miss Howbiggen, taking no notice of this disagreeable speech, continued, with characteristic anxiety, to Dr. Esdaile—

"Some future day! Oh, dear! that is too distant a prospect to satisfy my desire to see our new denizen of these solitary retreats—"

[" I dare say !" muttered Howbiggen.]

No, no! we must not put off anything of moment in this life; and it is of moment, in our scanty

circle, to secure so desirable an addition. Therefore, nothing can satisfy me but dispatching a note and our cards, with a view to trying to 'draw out' this distinguished person amongst us this very day. But, dear me! look, Dr. Esdaile, who is that riding by?" she exclaimed, hastening to the window.

"It is the worthy squire of Blacktarn, my esteemed friend, Mr. Lawton; by-the-bye, I ought to call at Blacktarn to see Miss Lawton—she has had a bad cold, and I must inquire——"

But here he was stopped short by Miss Howbiggen, who cried out, "Oh, dear me! I so wish to speak to him—I wish we could stop him!" And here, throwing up the window-sash, she waved a handkerchief, like a distressed damsel of old, under durance vile of giant or ogre, with the hope of catching the eye of the equestrian, when, to her great joy, he reined up his steed, and was soon seen advancing along the gravel-road up to the entrance door.

He had scarcely entered, than Miss Howbiggen, with laudable impatience, hastened to meet him. "Oh, I am so happy to see you, Mr. Lawton! I suppose you have, of course, left a card on Colonel Renmore, the new acquisition, as I trust he will prove, (that is, if we make the proper advances,) to our social circle?"

"He, he, he!" giggled out Mr. Howbiggen, at hearing this, as he just raised up his head in recognition of the entrance of Lawton, while he grumbled out, " Ugh, how d'ye do? How's Miss Lawton? ugh, ugh?"

"Why, ahem, her cold is on the whole somewhat better-ahem I" replied the lord of Blacktarn, in a pompous and solemn tone, which, as applied to trifles, was somewhat ludicrous in its effect; this, however, was one of his amusing characteristics, and perhaps was not lost sight of by the cynical Howbiggen, when a little while ago he designated Mr. Lawton "a bore." "Ahem," (continued Lawton,) " Laura (that was his daughter's name) caught cold in standing out too long, ahem, witnessing one of my grand improvements, ahem, in the pleasure-grounds"

. . . . "Yes, yes!" ejaculated Miss Howbiggen, hastily, and anxious to cut short the somewhat prosaic Lord of Blacktarn, especially when he was "mounted on his hobby," (for such it was,)-viz., the topic of "improvements," as we shall more fully witness hereafter. At present, we shall only remark that, if Mr. Lawton was a "genius" in his way, he was assuredly not one of Dr. Esdaile's "Genii of the Lake" exactly; but we hear Miss Howbiggen reiterate-" Of course you have left a card-"

"Left a card,—ahem,—a card?" rejoined Lawton, with an air of somewhat ludicrous surprise.

"No, no! I really have not heard till this moment of any colonel—any new acquisition—ahem, or arrival."

"No, no!" interposed Esdaile, "the colonel only came into the neighbourhood yesterday evening."

"True, true!" replied Miss Howbiggen, eagerly.

"So much the better, however, for our exhibition of readiness to shew him attention. There should certainly be as little time lost as possible in offering it.... You will have," she continued, turning to Lawton, "some interesting news to bear to Miss Lawton—"

[" Interesting news!" giggled out the ascetic.]

"Which is no other than that 'the Honourable Colonel Renmore, M. P., of the Clan-renmore family, county Caithness," is come amongst us. Such a partner for her at a ball, or to hand her in at dinner! Consider, you will of course exhibit your desire to shew so distinguished a person immediate attention."

"Certainly,—ahem,—certainly," replied Lawton, with due solemnity; "pray where is the Colonel residing? I shall be most happy to leave our cards—Laura's and mine—with a note, expressing how flattered we shall be—ahem—by the honour of his company to-morrow evening to dinner."

So saying, Mr. Lawton repaired to the writing-table and penned a note, while Miss Howbiggen took her seat opposite, and penned another, on the part of her brother and herself, as she said to Lawton, "You are doing precisely what I was about to do myself, only your invitation is for to-morrow, mine for to-day! And let me see," (she continued running on, and amusing herself with the dreams of that festivity to which she made sure "the Colonel's" presence would give such new impulse)—"let me see, we shall be able to have a charming party! Yourself and Dr. Esdaile"—(a bow from the Doctor and Mr. Lawton, of course)—"and Miss Lawton—"

["Permit me to ask if Miss Lawton has pursued the regimen I prescribed for her cold?" interposed the Doctor——]

"Wait a moment, Dr. Esdaile," resumed Miss Howbiggen;—"yes; there will be Mr. and Miss Lawton, Dr. Esdaile, that is three; then, your 'Genii of the Lake,' the illustrious 'trio,' that will make 'six;' then Colonel Renmore, seven; and Mr. Fenton, perhaps, (though I can scarcely reckon so certainly on him, for he is at some little distance,) eight; and Mr. Howbiggen and myself, ten. A very nice party!"

"Very nice indeed!" muttered Howbiggen to

himself; "and this is the way I am to have the house turned out at windows, without even being asked how far I find it 'nice,' as she calls it, or not. Vastly pleasant—agreeable indeed!"

This interesting calculation on the part of Miss Howbiggen-this most sociable of ladies-was concluded at the same moment that the notes both of herself and Mr. Lawton were achieved. The lady proceeded to ring the bell immediately, in order to dispatch her "billet" on the way of its destiny, when Mr. Lawton assured her, with due solemnity, that he should have much pleasure in leaving it, together-ahem-with his own note, which he should do in calling at the Traveller's Rest. The worthy squire was, in fact, scarcely less eager now than the fair spinster herself, to "draw out" this "distinguished stranger." Of course, in doing so, he had in his eye a desirable acquisition of acquaintance for his daughter; for no doubt, in this solitary district of meers, tarns, and cliffs, acquaintances were scarce, and consequently the more in request, when any such "novelties" offered themselves; and we are giving but a true picture of the "stir" a new arrival occasions in such a district.

Accordingly Mr. Lawton proceeded to take his leave, trusting he might be fortunate enough to find the Colonel at home.

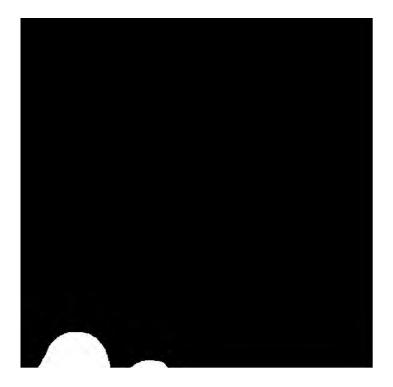
"I doubt that," observed Esdaile; "indoors he may be, I grant you; I think it is very probable; but I doubt whether he will be at home to you or any one. But let me ask once again as to Miss Lawton's cold—I think you said it was better—she has pursued the regimen, of course?"

" Oh, good heavens!" ejaculated Howbiggen, "that everlasting ' regimen !" and continued, after his manner, to grumble out something complimentary, when his murmuring was drowned in the merry fit of cachinnation which the Doctor raised as he made his escape, and which was not unreadily joined in by the Squire of Blacktarn; more, however, in his instance, at the entertaining moroseness of Howbiggen, than out of any disrespect for the Doctor's "regimen," which indeed Miss Lawton had found fully satisfactory. As for Howbiggen, he was both a "character" and an "invalid;" and as such, was accounted a "privileged person," and all his moroseness was not only taken in "good part," but served as food for entertainment to some, and moralizing to others.

And now Lawton and Esdaile had taken their departure—the first to Blacktarn, of course, stopping at the Traveller's Rest in his way; the last to his residence near Keswick. And thus we have explained the circumstances that led to those invitations which we have witnessed our hero receiving

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on his return to the hostelrie, as above related. As for Miss Howbiggen, she now continued her walk in no small anxiety and restlessness until the fate of her note should be decided; all which laudable anxiety was rudely designated by her uncomplimentary and disagreeably candid brother, "fidget."



CHAPTER X.

"Go! get thee gone! thou false deluding slave!"

TAMING OF THE SHREW.

ANXIOUSLY indeed did Miss Howbiggen await the arrival of an answer to her invitation. With eager and trembling hand did she break the seal, when at length, and late in the evening, it was placed before her. Her cynical brother had long retired to rest, worn out, in great measure, by his own fretfulness, and in a certain degree by the "fidget" (to use his own term) of his "amiable" sister. As for this excellent spinster, little rest could she hope for, until she was made acquainted with the fate of her attempts at "drawing the Colonel out." If, then, repose of mind had been banished hitherto by the pain of uncertainty as to the result of her adventure, it was not likely to be much more conceded her by the "bitter certainty" of ill success which the following words now conveyed :-

"Colonel Renmore's compliments to Mr. and Miss Howbiggen, and regrets he is unable to do himself the honour of accepting their kind invitation, in consequence of engagements that have demands on his time during his very short sojourn in the neighbourhood.

" Mr. and Miss Howbiggen."

A similar note was received by the denizens of Blacktarn, and excited similar regret with that of Miss Howbiggen, though in a more moderate and softened degree.

The tumult of spirit, the "tantarum" of disappointment experienced by this hospitable spinster, it would be difficult either to imagine or adequately portray.

"Tantalizing and vexatious!" she exclaimed;
"What a polite, delightful note! Vexatious that
it should be one of refusal! Most disappointing!"

In fact, the polite terms in which "the Colonel" had declined her advances towards "drawing him out" had only the effect of stimulating her anxiety to persevere in that desired object. If she had framed an agreeable image of the distinguished stranger hitherto in her mind, she now arrayed the pleasing picture in yet heightened colours and additional lustre. After walking up and down the room, reiterating the burden "very, very disap-

pointing, and extremely vexatious!" she at last endeavoured to console herself by hopes that on some future day a more satisfactory result of her social advances, as regarded "the Colonel," might be attained. However, another and another day dragged their weary flight along, and still Miss Howbiggen saw no prospect of attaining her desired object. It was to no want of assiduity, certainly, on her part, that this failure was to be attributed; for scarcely had ten days elapsed than she had dispatched nearly half the number of notes, all tending to the same desirable end. But alas! all met with the uniform result of disappointment in their laudable advances. To one, a reply was made of valetudinarianism; to another, that Colonel Renmore "regretted much" he was just setting off on his departure from the place; and bitter was the dismay, and intense the fidget, occasioned Miss Howbiggen by this cruel announcement. Away she sent a servant to the Traveller's Rest, to ascertain if Colonel Renmore had "really taken leave" of the spot; and when she was informed he was still there, she opened her eyes as widely as astonishment could distend them, as she ejaculated, "Well, I must say this is very singular. I cannot imagine what can be the reason Colonel Renmore acts so very much on the defensive, as regards our advances towards him. One

would really think they had been hostile, to find him thus keep us at arm's length. . . . What can be the reason he maintains this strict privacy, and manifests so unaltered a determination to keep to himself?"

"Why, what can it matter to you or me?" her brother would observe, pettishly; "I'm quite sick of this man's name, endlessly as it has been on your tongue since the first moment that blockhead Esdaile mentioned it to you. Can you not take the 'hint' that Colonel Renmore's endless refusal of your invitations offers—namely, that he does not desire to be annoyed with society?"

"Annoyed! Monstrous to hear you speak thus. No, no! there is some secret or another connected with this privacy which it would interest me amazingly to discover. Why! he haunts the place like a spy; he is in it, but not of it. I shall feel quite 'uncomfortable' (really I shall) until I fathom to its depth the whole 'mystery,' for by no other name can I designate it!"

So saying, she left the room to prepare herself for going out, while the pony-phaeton, in which herself and Mr. Howbiggen took their drives, was ordered to the door, but was sent back again, on her sagely determining that a "pedestrian tour" through the village would afford her better opportunities of delaying "where she listed," to make

inquiries concerning the history, character, movements (or it might be, peculiarities), of this mysterious yet courtly stranger. Unsocial in disposition she could not believe him to be, so polite was the style of his address, both as Esdaile had represented it to her and as the style of his notes testified. "What could, then, be the reason of his thus standing aloof-of his perpetual excuses that he was about to leave the spot-that his movements were 'unsettled and uncertain'? And yet still was he there! and still unwilling to meet the advances of sociability and hospitality a stranger is generally so willing to meet, and by which he feels flattered, while he is pleased in evincing his sense of the attentions offered him." To solve the problem, then, of this "mystery," if possible, Miss Howbiggen sallied forth on her portentous way to the village of Buttermere; while her courteous brother's reflections on her errand were somewhat to the following effect :- " Ugh! tiresome it is a man can't be left to himself when he wishes it ! ugh, you can't seek a retreat of quiet or privacy a moment, but you must be rummaged out by the worrying civility or impertinent curiosity of some one or another !- bore ! plague ! pest !"

So thought Mr. Howbiggen, and so sallied forth on her way his "amiably" inquisitive sister; and we may venture to say that no pilgrim, even proceed-

ing to Mecca, ever journeyed with greater zeal than herself. Nor was she animated by a less inciting principle than any pilgrim that ever walked barefoot even, and with pease in his shoes; for assuredly, as far as zeal is concerned, the spirit of religion may be matched by the spirit of curiosity, or call it, if you please, of gossiping. All anxiety to "glean information," she demanded it of the first person that came in her way, on having entered the village. Whether exercised to the purpose or not,-whether with the probable chance of obtaining the desired intelligence or not, seems to have been scarcely of more consequence in this first ebullition of her question-asking errand, than the circumstance of giving some vent to the swelling current of her anxiety, or (call it if you will) her "fidget," which longed to force itself out in words! As chance would so have it, the first person that presented himself was one "Jock," the carrier's man already mentioned as having brought the Colonel's baggage from Keswick. She had now rounded the corner of the lake, and was pursuing the little road, or rather lane, leading to the Traveller's Rest and the village, and at this point she encountered honest Jock. He was plodding his dusty way along, groaning under a heavy "fardel" of baggage which he was conveying (secundum artem) from Buttermere to some spot in

the neighbourhood. He wore a smock-frock, and was adorned with a blue cotton neckerchief besides, together with a low-crowned straw hat, with a piece of whip-cord for a band. From beneath his hat-brim hung down some knotted red locks, by way of variety to the straight-smoothed hair at the top of his head.

"Oh! you are the Buttermere and Keswick carrier, are you not?" asked his fair interrogator.

"No!" answered Jock, somewhat waggishly, for he was a blunt and dogged kind of clown, and somewhat of the vein of the ancient Touchstones, piquing himself as he did on the sharpness and pertinency of his answers. "No, ma'am, I be-ant the carrier, and yet I be the carrier too, and don't speak falsely neither!" So saying, he rested his load against a stump by the wayside, pulled off his straw hat, rubbed his forehead with the back of his hand, and grinned complacently in his fair questioner's face.

"Pooh, pooh!" she replied; "I don't understand speaking in riddles!"

"Why," continued our "Touchstone," "in respect I carry the load, I am the carrier; but in respect I am not the person you would mean, I am not the carrier; therefore—"

"Dear, dear! do speak plainly! I "

- "Well then, ma'am, so I will! and I say I be not the carrier, but—I'm his man!"
- "Well, well, it is all one!" she replied, somewhat fussily; "I wished to inquire—"
- "Yees, it is all one! I wish it were two of us instead of one, to help me with my load!" And here he grinned again in clownish malice, at her apparent impatience at his answers.
- "Well, never mind, my good man, more than one is sometimes one too many; and—"
- "Yees! and sometimes one too few, as I find it just now;" and here he grinned applause over his own clownish conceit, and testified also his amusement at tantalizing Miss Howbiggen, whose character for question-asking, and stopping people with that view, was not altogether unknown in the hamlet.
- "Dear, dear, how provoking the oafish being is; he will not let me come to what I want to say!" exclaimed the tantalized spinster to herself, when she continued to the "grin-adorned" Jock—" There is a gentleman at the Traveller's Rest——"
 - "Yees, I dare say there be! two or three-"
- "Pooh, pooh! I mean a certain Colonel Renmore, who I understand is about to quit the spot, if he has not already quitted it; now, as you are the carrier of the place, I dare say you can inform

me if he is gone, since you might have had to convey some of his luggage possibly? and——"

"Oh Lord! oh Lord, ma'am! you runs on too fast for my poor wit possibly to understand half that you would wish to ask me!" replied Jock, putting on a look of ludicrous dismay and pretended ignorance. . . . "Bless you, ma'am! you put me all in a fluster!"

" Well, Jock-"

"Yes, ma'am," replied the clown, with pretended officiousness.

"Oafish booby!" exclaimed Miss Howbiggen to herself, much worried at having to deal with a being so "impracticable" as the dogged and malicious clown before her; and the more annoyed was she, since she fancied, from the fellow's look and manner, that he possessed the desired intelligence, but withheld it purposely from her. At least, she suspected as much, by the malicious self-complacence of his countenance, which, in other and plainer language, may be construed "sauciness."

"Tell me!" at length she exclaimed, raising her voice, and now rendered quite angry; "Tell me whether the gentleman I mentioned has (as far as you know) left the village or not?"

"Left the village or not, ma'am?" answered

Jock, with an oafish stare of pretended surprise, and his mouth gaping wide at the same time.

"Yes, yes, I ask you! don't turn my own questions back upon me! I ask you, I repeat! So speak, my good man, if you have a tongue, and——"

"Why yees, I have a tongue, ma'am! but it's so dry at present, that I raly shouldn't mind wetting it, the better to answer you, if so be you might be kind enough to let me drink your health!"

"Is it even so? Oh! you can speak fast enough, I find, when you have anything to ask for!" replied Miss Howbiggen, turning away indignantly from the waggish clown. "No, no, my friend, I do not give anything to idle persons such as yourself, who cannot return a plain answer to a plain question!" So saying, "Miss Howbiggen turned precipitately away from Jock, finding she had taken (to use the humble adage) "the wrong sow by the ear," her impatience not being allayed by any means by the words which the Buttermere Touchstone spoke, as he resumed his "fardel" and "trudged" on.

"A plain answer, said you, ma'am? Well now, I thought I spoke plain enough!—he, he—ho, ho—ha!" continued the clown, chuckling to himself, while he proceeded to soliloquize, with an arch leer in his face, "Why, if I had known (as 'tis

like I may) the gentleman's movements, do you suppose I was going to tell you about 'em? No, no! go, ax himself, if you want to know! I only can say, he is a gentleman, every inch on him; and paid me handsomely for bringing his baggage to the Traveller's Rest, when he first came there, ten days sin', or more! He would not have heard a poor man say he was dry without treating him to drink his health! And I'm sure if there ever was dry work it is answering plaguing questions and carrying heavy bundles."

So saying, and with this indirect reflection on the want of liberality in his late questioner, Jock proceeded on his way.

Miss Howbiggen, after having walked onward a little way, stopped for a moment, as she stood tapping the ground impatiently with her foot, and playing with the ivory top of her parasol, while she considered with herself as to which was the best quarter to which she should next address herself. The Traveller's Rest was at hand. "Suppose I go at once to the Colonel's 'head-quarters,'" she said, "and make inquiries there!"

Accordingly, she had soon cleared the threshold of the porch, and was met by the landlady of the hostelrie, who received her with a most formal curtsey, and begged to ask "What was her pleasure?" "Oh! only, Mrs. Wetherby, to inquire whether Colonel Renmore has yet left you? since we have a party on Sunday next, and we should have been delighted to have sent a note to try and prevail on him to come and see us, in case he might be still in the neighbourhood."

"He is still in Buttermere, ma'am; but not at home."

"There is the cause of our regret! He is 'not at home' to any one it seems. Well, well, I'm delighted to hear that he has not left the place absolutely; since we have yet a chance, I trust, of the pleasure of his company! What can be the reason he will not favour us with his society, considering he has now been here some days?"

"Really," replied dame Wetherby, with a stiffness that was truly formidable, bristling up her chin, and "perpendicularizing" the plaited border of her widow's cap, just as a fighting-cock bristles up its crest-feathers; "really, I cannot inform you of the Colonel's reasons for declining invitations—he may be an invalid, or busy. I do not interfere in any such matters, I can assure you, ma'am,—" and here dame Wetherby coolly looked awry, as she added,—" and do not see why others should!"

"Exactly, exactly!" replied Miss Howbiggen, a little thrown "a-back" by this indirect reflection on her own spirit of inquisitiveness, of which Mrs. Wetherby was too well aware not to be on her guard against it. "Exactly," continued Miss Howbiggen, in a somewhat quickened tone; . . . "I merely wished to make the inquiry which I just suggested, in order not to intrude any more invitations on the Colonel, in case his stay were really so unsettled as he seems hitherto to have considered it. He may, however, possibly prolong his stay, and then the case would be altered. If so, I might venture to send an invitation for Sunday next, should you think he will be still at Buttermere."

"It is impossible for me to say!—Ahem!" . . .
. . . "Perhaps we may have the pleasure of

meeting him at church ?" . . .

"I really cannot tell!" replied the unbending landlady; "but this I can tell, that it would be well if folks looked forward to going to church for other and worthier objects than falling in with the children of this world!" and as she ejaculated these words, her eyes were upturned in appropriate accompaniment, for the chord of the good dame's sanctimonious propensities had been touched on, by the mention of "church." And now, in her turn, she began to be felt as inconvenient by Miss Howbiggen, as the latter had been felt a moment past by the landlady, who proceeded, in a tone of whining edification—"Ah! it is to hear what lessons the pulpit administers that we ought to go to

church! not to gaze about us! Ah, could you but hear such a preacher as Mr. Quandish! . . ."
. . . "Oh, no doubt—no doubt!" replied Miss Howbiggen, hastily; "and by-the-bye, how is the worthy chapel minister?" she added, in a tone of conciliation, by way of removing the former unfavourable impression made by her spirit of inquisitiveness, for she was aware how much an ally Quandish was of dame Wetherby. . . . "I really must hear him preach some day."

"Ah, it would do you good to hear nim! It is now more than a week since I heard him!"

"Indeed-has he been out of Buttermere?"

"Yes, has he, for some days past; but be he where he may, he is ever 'seeking the Lord,' and walking in the path of righteousness! Oh, what a 'sweet discourse' his last was; the text was from Corinthians. He preached for three hours all but seven minutes. . . ."

... "Oh, yes! I remember hearing about it in the village." ["Thank Heaven, I was not amongst the congregation," she added to herself.] "I must certainly hear him some day—so good morning, Mrs. Wetherby! Good morning!" she continued, making a curtsey, and bustling out at the porch, as well pleased to escape the infliction of the "dame's" sanctimony and powers of "prosiness" as Mrs. Wetherby had lately been

to shake from her shoulders the load of interrogation which Miss Howbiggen was ever so ready to impose.

"Not at all nearer the mark!" exclaimed the provoked lady, once more abroad on the field of discovery. . . . "Cannot learn the cause of the mysterious conduct I want so much to have explained! . . . But, dear me, who is this advancing towards the inn—this old man?" . . . And then looking attentively at the person in question, she added, "It is old Mike! . . . Just the person I should think likely to solve the problem! He knows everything, and may well be accounted a wizard by the innocent vulgar of Buttermere and its neighbourhood!"

So saying, she advanced hastily up to the "ancient mariner," who eyed her somewhat askance, wondering why he was honoured with a greeting, the air of which betokened so much eagerness. "She has something to ask me about," muttered the old man to himself. "I can see it by her countenance! There is not a spoon stolen, or a rogue to be found out, or a village love-match afoot that old Mike is not consulted! though this last errand is not that on which Miss Howbiggen is come, I should think! . . ."

"Good morning, Mike! glad to see you so well!"
"Thank you, ma'am! thank you!" said Mike,

doffing his seal-skin cap (heretofore described), and passing on in order to escape the suspected interrogatory.

"Oh, pray stop a moment, Mike!—pray stop!

I wanted to ask you—"

[. . . "I thought so!" muttered Mike to himself. Now I wonder what it can be she wants to ask me of all people in the world?" . . .]

that Mrs. Wetherby's new guest, here, at the Traveller's Rest, should have been in the place so long and should refuse to see any one in it!"

"No, not at all strange," muttered Mike again to himself, . . . when he added aloud, in his usual wild and mysterious way, . . . "Oh, it is strange, no doubt! what of that? All life is a 'riddle,' and full of strange chances, accidents, and adventures! I have seen some strange things in my day, and known some strange spirits too!"

"Dear me, Mike, you frighten me! And your look of significance when you say so would almost make me believe what the people say—namely, that you hold commune with spirits of another world than this! But to turn from this subject to that of the shyness of this distinguished gentleman in question."

"Shyness!" muttered Mike again to himself, repeating her words, without, however, answering

her question. "Shyness! ay, it must be pretty strict if the eye of fate does not search it out sooner or later!"

... "What are you talking about, Mike?" interposed Miss Howbiggen, with an air in which
her tacit dread or awe of the speaker prevailed
over the ordinary impatience of her inquisitiveness.
Mike still continued to "dream aloud" to himself,
either voluntarily desiring to put her inquisitiveness aside, which is more than probable, or absorbed in the reflections which arose in his mind.
Perhaps both conditions of mind were experienced
by the "wizard mariner" on the present occasion.

"I've wandered many a mile and through many an outlandish clime, and when I least expected it, the person I thought of and wanted to see has run up against me! And so is it the other way. Do what we will to avoid a suspected evil, there is a fatality that forces us right upon it, when we least dreamed that the blow was falling! . . . Well, well! we're poor helpless things! Heaven, ha' mercy on us all!" and he shook his hoary locks, apparently too much absorbed to think of the presence of Miss Howbiggen, who, at length losing her patience, regarded the old man with a look of mingled surprise and awe, as she exclaimed, "It is of no avail! I can make nothing of him any more than of the provoking oaf Jock, or the demure

widow Wetherby! . . . Good morning to you, Mike, since you cannot resolve the doubt!" she added, as she now took her leave of the ancient mariner.

The old man raised up his head hastily-" Good morning, good morning,-God be wi' you!" and then, after she was gone some little distance, his countenance lost its meditative cast and assumed a look of concern and significance, as he bent his glance on her track, while he remarked, " And it is thus the wind sets! I have known a worse evil than tiring a man's patience arise from a spirit of inquisitiveness on the part of a chattering curious woman! I have known many a little beginning the cause of 'mighty sorrow!' This woman will not be satisfied till she has set inquiry on foot to pry into the boy's movements! . . . 'Boy,' I call him, for did I not know him as a boy-ay, from infancy. Well, well! It is but the old chronicle of human mischief repeated! . . . A woman lost all humankind Paradise, and won him a heritage of pain! A woman set the world at loggerheads, years on years ago, at a place they call Troy, as I've been told! A woman. Well," he added, still bending his glance on the pertinacious spinster's track. . . . " A weak instrument for fate to work by !- but why not that as well as a fiercer one, if the end must be so? Well,

be it as it may, it is not Mike shall betray him. Nay, have I not cause to befriend him? but that is a long tale." . . .

And so saying, after a pause, Mike trudged onwards, wrapt in these his meditations, and muttering to himself. With respect to the words that we have just heard escape him, purporting that he was under some obligation to our hero, and consequently unwilling to whisper any secrets he knew of him, we shall have an opportunity of learning what was meant in good time from his own lips, no less than from the disclosures of our story: at present, we will return to Miss Howbiggen; and pursue her on the way of gossip—or, it may be, as Mike would whisper—of fate.

"It is plain," said this lady to herself, "that this old man knew more about the subject of my inquiry, or else he would have evinced some curiosity! Certainly so! I am confident of it! . . . Everything confirms me in the suspicion there is some mystery in the matter; and though I may not solve it, yet there is no harm in 'just stepping down' the village and trying my chance of finding some one who may possibly happen to set me a little at rest on the subject!"

Accordingly, with this admirable spirit of perseverance, or rather pertinacity, Miss Howbiggen proceeded on her "eventful way."

CHAPTER XI.

" Not I for love or duty,
But seeming so for my peculiar end."
Shakspeare.

The pale shadows of a row of yew-trees cast a yet more forbidding hue on the countenance of a person descried pacing slowly beneath them, darkened as his aspect already was with the bad passions portrayed in it. His brow was bent downwards, and his eye fixed on the ground, while his whole air and feature testified that he was engaged in some deep and anxious "self-commune." The natural "pent-house" of the lid was yet more protruded over the eye by the frown with which the brow was contracted; but had you passed suddenly by him, and he had raised up his head to see who it was that intruded on his cogitations, you would have shrunk back in disgust, and distrust too, at the wily search of the eye that peered craftily forth

from under the lid, speaking some bad design. You would have witnessed with a sense of both loathing and apprehension the feature and its expression too. The eye was of a sulky, washylooking hue, as it appeared when more dilated, though generally from the scowl of the brow, it was too deeply imbedded for you to perceive its colour; nor did it awaken in you much inclination to look on it more, after having been first of all met by the repulsiveness of the general expression. Did you ever, reader, witness a rattlesnake? if you ever did, you will have remembered the leaden appearance of the eye, looking more like a drop of venom distilled into the socket, than a vital lens reflecting the light of day. It renders the reptile a very personification of venom. Its appearance alone is a dose of hebenon-and of such deadly hue and character was the eye of the sinisterlooking being that now meets us, where he paces under those yew boughs. This solitary avenue of funereal stems, intermixed with other trees, fringed a walk at the back of the village, and ran along an ascent which had in view the hills on one side, and the meer in the hollow below; while between these, the Traveller's Rest and the village spread stragglingly before the eye. No spot could be more lovely than the village of Buttermere seen from the eminence where the

person before us was now pursuing his meditations. The blue smoke floating upwards through the trees, amidst which the cottages were at once interspersed and nested-the village echoes toothe murmur of voices-the din of the blacksmith's hammer, or woodman's axe-the clamour of the merry children-as these sounds came borne along on the breeze that blew freshly up from the meer, all those rustic scenes and voices offered a tribute of charm to the eye and ear! But few were the pleasurable associations that either those village scenes or sounds awakened in the breast of the person before us! As the few broken and hasty sentences of his cogitations fretfully escaped him, they ran thus-" Very strange I should have not yet come up with him! - I've been lurking about Keswick this week past and more, and yet-no signs of him! though I am confident that it was somewhere in that direction his flight was taken !- I have made all inquiries as to who has entered, and who has quitted the place; and no one could I hear of but this Colonel Renmore. whose name is a sufficient guarantee for his respectability! This gentleman is, moreover, at dame Wetherby's-and her I should be cautious not to offend by suggesting suspicious inquiries relative to any one under a roof so respectable; besides," . . . and here the person thus cogitating started at the sound of a rustling noise, as of female drapery; while he suddenly composed his countenance, and smoothed away the frown which had contracted his brow, as he said in a subdued and somewhat fawning tone, while his look at the same time bore all the humility and assumed sincerity imaginable. . . . "Hah! is it the good Miss Howbiggen that I have the pleasure of recognising? I was lost in those meditations which no man who takes on himself to give counsel of godliness to others should forget!—namely, to commune with his own heart! sift his own actions! and consider how far he himself is 'worthy' in the sight of Heaven!"

And here he uttered a sigh, while his eyes glanced downwards and looked askance, rendering his countenance yet more revolting, if possible, under this new phase of expression, than it had been when disfigured with the malign frown it wore a moment ago. In spite of the meekness that the drawn-down corners of the mouth were intended to exhibit, there was malice lurking in them; just as in the pretended slumber of the tiger, whose savageness is only watching for the moment when it may best spring upon its victim. With respect to the other features of his face, though we can add nothing that can render it more forbidding, as regards the sinister and malign expres-

sion of the countenance, (in spite of its Pharisaical veil of "outward righteousness,") we will just fill up the picture by saying that the hair was a light, "unwholesome" red, and both on the head and in the whiskers was scant and jejune. The complexion of the face was livid, and marked with the small-pox; while, to add to the sinister expression of his countenance, the nose was somewhat on one side, and the lip was habitually drawn up either on one side, or both lips were distended straight in the forced smile which, thus varying in character, spoke the same hidden purpose of the heart, that too little responded to the assumed guise of the outward feature.

"Good Mr. Quandish," for such indeed was the person in question, "I fear I have interrupted you in your meditations," replied Miss Howbiggen to the salutation just witnessed of the soidisant dissenting preacher. "You have been a stranger in Buttermere, I am informed by Mrs. Wetherby, for this week past and more?"

"There are sheep to be looked after in other places besides Buttermere," replied this pattern of probity, with due sanctimoniousness. "The fear of Tophet made my sinful brethren of Keswick cry aloud for my ghostly aid. I felt myself bound in all duty to hasten to their aid. Yea! if I had been thrice the distance, I should have

gone forth unto them, to fight the good fight against the evil One. . . . But of the worthy widow, Mistress Wetherby, how say you, does she well?"

"Ay, does she! except that I could glean no intelligence from her concerning the movements of a gentleman I have a singular desire to learn something more about."

"What gentleman? what gentleman?" asked Quandish, forgetting for the moment his solemn and slow manner, in the eagerness he felt to catch at any information he might possibly gain concerning the topic which we not long ago witnessed as engrossing his thoughts.

"Oh! it was merely that as a stranger of distinction has come into the neighbourhood, we wished to shew him all hospitality, which, however, he as diligently repels, excusing himself as busy at one time, ill at another, and uncertain in his movements at all times,—umph!—very strange, is it not?"

"And who is he? who is this? Verily, it doth at first sight appear strange."

"A distinguished person,—you have of course heard his name, Colonel Renmore."

"Yes, I have heard his name. He is a scion of a noble house, and one of our legislators, so sayeth Mrs. Wetherby, — if he of a truth," added Quandish to himself, "be indeed the person he describes himself as being." And here a gleam of satisfaction played over his countenance, as a thought arose that the person we have above heard him express he was looking for might possibly be nearer than he at first imagined.

"He is in Buttermere still?" asked Miss Howbiggen, with an inquiring air; for though she had learned this piece of intelligence, she pretended ignorance of it by way of eliciting further information if possible.

"I know not his movements, nor those of any man!" (replied Quandish,) "not I! I meddle not in other men's concerns. Nay, ask not me, good lady; I know not truly. . . . but," he added to himself, "I will not be long before I do know. Is it possible that I should actually have gone away to Keswick from the spot where the fox had taken cover? Umph! it can hardly be so."

"You seem wrapped in some anxious consideration, Mr. Quandish," observed Miss Howbiggen; "no doubt you are struck with the singularity of the circumstance I have mentioned, that there should have been any gentleman in the neighbourhood who should think proper to live so much to himself."

"Oh no! not at all, madam—this was not the subject on which my thoughts were occupied. I

was ruminating on worthier and more important considerations than this stranger. Alas, alas! it was, how many were strangers to the works of grace and goodness, which I would feign in my humble function urge them to turn unto. . . ."

But here Miss Howbiggen began to be a little impatient again, finding that the preacher, the "good man," ran away from the topic that interested her, to those which (as she supposed) interested himself. She could not blame him; he only acted with the same spirit of self-love with which all humankind act,-with the total inability for ever exemplified of placing ourselves in the situation of others, and viewing things in the same light or through the same medium with them. Perhaps it was the "worthy Quandish's" object to get rid of the equally "worthy" spinster, knowing how little able her characteristic impatience would be to bear up against a battery of sickly sanctimony. If such were indeed the case, this pretended pattern of godliness fully achieved his design, and proceeded running on in the same pious strain, his eyes the while fixed pertinaciously on the ground, till he found at length the coast clear, and himself rid of the incumbrance (as he felt it at present) of the inquisitive spinster's company. He even pretended to be too much absorbed to take notice of the thrice repeated, "Good morning, Mr.

Quandish," which she ejaculated as she took leave. He did rightly, since with talkative persons the least word uttered is a hinge for them to hang an hour's conversation upon, and often at the time when it is most irksome to submit to it. He was scarcely by himself than he exclaimed, "Is it possible that this name, 'Colonel Renmore,' after all, is but another courtly style to disguise our fugitive? for none but distinguished names suit this accomplished felon. Ha! ha! my friend, have I been beating for you close round the burrow, but have not unearthed you yet? . . . What! you have left off your late name of Manners, Hope, &c.? To think I should have turned back to Keswick at the very time, the very next day, to look for the fugitive Manners, as I thought he yet called himself, whom I imagined to be there, while he was in this very spot under a new nom de guerre, as the French have it. So, gallant Colonel, it is thus you have 'stolen a march' on me; but we shall soon come up with you," he continued, as he pushed his hat resolutely down on his brow, and buttoned his outer vestment tighter across his chest, with the air of one who braces himself up to some feat of strength or labour. . . . "Yet," he added, "after all I may be mistaken, this person may really be the Colonel Renmore that he describes himself as being,-a well-known and distinguished member of society. No matter, no time shall be lost in explaining Miss Howbiggen's 'mystery,' and my own." So saying, he strode away in the direction of the Traveller's Rest, his mind outstripping his step in its eagerness to be at the spot. And as the varied thoughts of triumph at one moment, and doubt at another, rose in his mind, his lip was, now, curled in a scornful and self-complacent smile, and, now, succeeded by the same frown of impatience and malice which distorted his features on our first meeting him.

CHAPTER XII.

"Though the seas threaten, they are merciful."

TEMPEST.

"The game is done! I've won, I've won!"
Quoth She."

COLERIDGE'S ANCIENT MARINER.

QUANDISH was not the only one of our "dramatis personæ" who was now making his way for the village hostelrie. Honest Jock, the carrier, who has been witnessed not long ago as leaving Miss Howbiggen so dissatisfied with his answers, was also plodding in that direction, having left his fardel at the spot where he had to take it. He was making his way by the meer bank, when a loud clamour of voices arose from a crowd of villagers, reiterating the words, "Here he is! let us follow him! here he is!"

While Jock was yet looking round towards the crowd to discern the cause of the clamour, he was hastily accosted by a person with an angle-rod in his hand, who asked him in a hurried and anxious accent—

"Who is it those people are calling after? whom are they following?"

"Why, your honour, answered Jock, doggedly, "it is one whom you wont easily forget when you've once seen him."

"Very possibly," was the reply, "but that conveys little information to me as to who he is."

"Why, it is one," replied our Touchstone, in his usual style of evasive waggery, "that I had rather meet with a crowd about him than alone."

"Well, well, I have no doubt you are very well acquainted with him and his character, my good fellow, but not so myself; therefore, without more riddles on the matter, let me hear."

"Why, who should it be, then," exclaimed Jock, yielding at length to the tone of quiet command in which "the gentleman with the angle" addressed these last words to him,—" who should it be but old Mike."

"Old Mike is it, indeed, ay? I don't wonder at his having such a crowd collected round him, since I understand his adventures are so eagerly listened to."

"Ay, that they be, Sir; and if I had a sixpence to spend at dame Wetherby's tap," proceeded the waggish clown, "why, I would e'en follow the rest on 'em after the old man up to the inn,—for it is there they are all going, I see." And here Jock appeared to be very busily searching in his pockets for the desired "tester," but with poor success. He was, however, relieved by the benign manner in which his hint was taken, as Renmore, for it was himself, replied—

"The want of a sixpence shall not deter you from going, my good friend; here!" so saying he extended to Jock the desired largess which was to enable the clown to drink his health; and Jock having now "made his leg," and plodded off to join the rest of the crew, Renmore was left to himself.

"Bless me!" he exclaimed, "I could not help thinking it was myself they might possibly be denouncing, when they clamoured out 'here he is!'... And so," he continued, "it is old Mike. Unlike this poor clown who would dread to meet the village wizard alone, I wish to do so, and learn all that his second sight, or rather his calculations on the future, founded on his knowledge of the past, have to impart to me. . I will by-and-by, when the shadows have a little deepened, proceed to the inn. Perhaps the crowd will have dispersed by that time. It is safer to keep aloof a little while longer." So saying, he retraced his steps along the meer bank with his angle-rod in his hand, the

pursuit of fishing being one of those pretences he was obliged to assume before dame Wetherby, and her few rude retainers at the inn, as appearances of the manner in which his time was past. Leaving him, then, pursuing his way under the cliff brows that overshadowed the meer, we will return to the Traveller's Rest, in order to join Quandish again, whom we now find seated at Mrs. Wetherby's teatable, but accompanying her more sober cups with the stronger libation of brandy infused in the water instead of tea. In fact, "tea-totalism" would have been at a discount with our preacher had he lived at the present day; but, however, since "to the pure all things are pure," the strength of the godly Mr. Quandish's potation had an innocent characteristic about it, which there was no questioning. In fact, his piety wore a more heightened feature in the estimation of Mrs. Wetherby when he spoke of " fortifying the frail tenement," with other such sanctimonious jargon; and she would remark with pious concern, "that, doubtless, too much labour in the good fight" had much worn him down. Thus religiously, then, did this respectable pair betake them, the one to a ponderous old-fashioned tumbler of the above-mentioned spiritual beverage, the other to a small china cup, also of the taste of the old day, filled with the less ardent infusion of bohea.

The preacher was, as may be imagined, all anxiety to proceed with his inquiries relative to the object of his recently awakened suspicion; but, as was his custom, he first of all inquired, with due devotion, after the "rose of Sharon," as he used to term his hostess's lovely daughter.

"She should now be almost bringing her kine in to their milking," replied dame Wetherby; "but you speak too kindly of her, Mr. Quandish, too kindly of her, considering how she has repulsed you. Call her rather a 'tare of the field' than a rose of Sharon, or of any other place, as long as she is one of the stiff-necked and rebellious generation."

"'Good for evil, good for evil,' would I ever return, Mrs. Wetherby," (ejaculated the preacher, sighing forth the most sanctimonious nasal dole,)—"good for evil is ever my return; but let us address ourselves to talk on more indifferent subjects, for this one doth too much move me; . . . and let me inquire, then," he continued, after a moment's pause, "how fares the gallant gentleman whom I understand to be under your roof: much occupied, I presume?—or, peradventure, but a valetudinarian; since I am informed he is much sought after by the gentry around, and yet will not go forth from his solitude to meet them; perchance he is even now within your doors, and"

But his words were here suddenly cut short by that same clamour of voices already mentioned as exclaiming, "Here he is! let us follow! let us follow him!" This occasioned both Quandish and the landlady to look out at the entrance porch, when they saw a number of village children and peasants, both men and women, thronging round an old man who seemed to be approaching the little hostelrie. The same scene presented itself to them as that which Renmore and honest Jock saw from the meer bank.

"It is old Mike," said Mrs. Wetherby, recognising him by his silvery locks and weird aspect. "The children can never see him or let him pass without begging a 'story' of him."

"It is old Mike, is it?" replied Quandish, shrinking back at the information, as his lip quivered, and his countenance momentarily assumed a more deadly paleness, as though he had some latent reason for dreading the recognition of the weird mariner, though what this might be we are as yet unable to divine. "It is old Mike, is it? Strange that the children should not be afraid of such a wizard-looking old being as he is, since older persons than themselves are!"... he muttered, eyeing the weird mariner askance, and with an aspect as little assured as it was either friendly or pleased, while now the old man approached the

porch. In fact, he had, after his interview with Miss Howbiggen in a preceding chapter, proceeded on his way to the Traveller's Rest.

"Oh! he is a mighty favourite amongst the children," replied dame Wetherby. "I know not how others may like him, though I fancy all consider it best to keep well with him. Some say he is half a wizard, or mad; be this as it may, he has seen a deal of the world, and a marvellous number of strange sights, Mr. Quandish; and woe betide the man who is his enemy, or who provokes his displeasure!"

"Indeed!" replied Quandish, in a tone of half surprise, more pretended than real, and half apprehension. "Ay! no doubt it is so. I have heard he is not a common sort of character to deal with. But here he is in the porch, followed by the whole village troop at his heels. Verily, all the heathen are bursting in upon us. No Midianitish dancinggirl ever collected a more profane or numerous crowd around her than this village wizard."

Though these words were muttered in a low growl by the surly and secretly alarmed hypocrite, they were not altogether so inaudible as not to reach the quick ears of old Mike, who had by this time seated himself on one of the side benches or "settles" within the porch.

" Profane call you the poor things," he re-

torted, " who have followed the old man to hear a small bit of his perilous story. There may be those who wear a garb of sanctity that yet may conceal a heart more (much more) profane than any here." And as he said these words, he looked with a regard of scorn and reprobation on the hypocrite, as the latter skulked back to the side room from which he had emerged, withdrawing his eyes at the same time from the keen and confounding glance of the " weird man." " Curses on this interruption," said the hypocrite to himself as he ground his teeth; "just as I had introduced the subject of this Renmore to the foolish woman here, in order to arrive at such confirmation of my suspicions as I fancied she could afford me, when in comes this inauspicious mariner, or wizard, or whatever he is. His presence is dangerous to me, so I will away at once, and seek another opportunity of coming across this suspected ' Colonel.' "

So saying, Quandish stole away from the Traveller's Rest as furtively, and scarcely less expeditiously than he came, cursing the interruption of old Mike again and again in his heart.

Meantime, the crowd of villagers and children had besieged the porch, nothing abating of their good-humoured clamours for "a story" from old Mike.

"Wait a bit! wait a bit! ye little noisy ones," said the old man as he took a little flaxen-haired

urchin on his knee, and smoothed down his glossy hairs which the wind had blown about in all directions. "Wont ye let an old man take breath awhile, after hunting him for a quarter of an hour's good walk? Wait a bit, ye little rogues!"

The landlady here came into the porchway, greeting the old man as she administered to him a can of her best ale, being glad on all occasions to conciliate him, and regarding him with the same superstitious awe with which he was contemplated by the whole rude populace round.

"You have walked far, friend Mike, and I am glad you have chosen a seat at the Traveller's Rest as your "resting" place too. Stand away, children! stand away! and don't crowd so into the porch."

"Thank ye, dame; thank ye," replied Mike as he raised the can to his lips. "Here's success to the Traveller's Rest; and after a weary voyage, a wanderer over the world could not wish for a more snug haven than the inside of its threshold; but don't drive the poor things away; I like to see them—I owe my life to a child," he added, with one of those looks fraught with mystery and meaning that was usually the forerunner of one of those "wondrous recitals" that had made him an object of curiosity throughout the neighbourhood, and won him the reputation of a wizard.

"Owe your life to a child?" cried four or five

voices at one and the same moment, as the peasants from whom they proceeded took their pipes from their mouths, left their cans on the table, and rushed from the tap-room close by the entrance to the porchway, joining their acclamation to that of the children who were now more loudly than ever crying out for the expected story.

The old man sat for a few moments as if wrapped in deep contemplation, his cup still held in his hand and withdrawn from his lips, as if taken away in the act to speak. To look at the countenances of the rude group, betokening mingled fear, marvel, and expectation at what should fall from the charmed lips of the weird mariner, was a study for a painter; and if amongst the rest of the group, Quandish had remained skulking in the background with his coarse and pallid features, lit up by the slant gleam of light that shot from the porchway into the passage, the picture would have been complete; but he was gone.

The gaze, meantime, of innocent and infantine wonder that characterized the children was interestingly contrasted with the look of mingled sorrow and the deep meaning of painful experience that marked the furrowed brow of the village wizard. This contrast of expression was yet more strong and marked than even was afforded by that of features—by the bright glancing eyes first

directed on the old man, and then on one another, of the youthful group;—by their flowing curls too and glossy golden locks,—in opposition to the sunken eye, the weird and haggard look, and silvery hairs of the aged seaman. The older peasants, too, of both sexes thronged around him not less anxiously than the children. At length he broke silence—

. . . . "It was a fearful and a weary way, and the ship drifted, day after day, before a keen wind, and amidst floating masses of ice, while famine and the numbing polar chill rendered every brow livid, and cast its fetter on every limb. Yet still that woman . . . methinks I see her now . . . that Egyptian woman laughed as she clasped the child she held to her bosom. . . .

"The sun waned blood-red through the gloom, and fainting forms were gasping around her on the deck—but still she laughed—the maniac thing! She laughed, and strained that child to her heart, as if she held a seraph-birth in her arms, and with it a talisman of safety, and a guardian from peril. . . .

"Life was just sustained in the crew; the limited and scant pittance allotted to us was every day being reduced; the drifting ice-masses no longer afforded the vessel a passage,—I sat gloomily awaiting death, as the terrible peaks of ice rose overtopping her, and straining against her timbers, till they cracked and groaned through every plank. . . . Yet it was madness to turn to that woman, and mark her joy, her assurance of safety in the midst of peril so fearful, and in sight of death so imminent. . . .

"Her wild dark eye lightened in a sort of frenzied exultation, as one would reproach her with madness—another express that death was at hand —another feebly ask, in her hearing, for the food he was perishing for the want of,—it was madness, I say, to hear her wild laugh, and view her terrible glee, as she watched with wan, yet triumphing aspect the dangers that surrounded us, and to tell us yet to be of good heart, and droop not!

"I know not how it was, I looked at her as a superior being, and drew comfort from her words involuntarily, though my hopes dared not trust in their fulfilment. I gazed on her and on those relentless masses that hemmed us in, and menaced us with a grave, where the ice of death was not more obdurate (at least, I could scarcely deem so in my pain) than that ice-chill which already inflicted on us the pain of a living death, whose terrors were only heightened by the prospect of an impending death-doom.

"I sate watching the masses and the frore and dazzling white mist that played over them, and amused me with the rainbow colours that lit up a

vast web of splendour over those icy walls of the overhanging crags, as the sun streamed over them, and I forgot, while gazing on the miracle of their beauty and magnificence, the terror that they menaced While I gazed, a crash, as though the sound of some mighty engine, shook the ship to her inmost hold, and roused me from my dream to the sensation of fear, which I, in unison with all my comrades, now felt, being under the impression that at length our doom was arrived-that at length our bark had foundered. But blessed be Heaven . . . it was not so! And while the echo of that crash died sullenly away, we heard the maniac laugh of that Egyptian shrilly tell forth its joy, and its triumph too, over our fears, as the mighty ice-mass seemed to stalk, as it were, past us, and float majestically on, while our ship, like a courser disengaged from the tighter rein that has curbed him, bore gallantly forward, and held her way through the loosened masses of ice, as if steered by some unseen and divine hand-as if wafted by some mystic and spiritual agency-till once more she bounded unimprisoned and uncircumscribed over the free and mighty expanse of the ocean deep!

"We looked on that woman as something of fatal, blessedly fatal, and charmed birth! There were some of the gazers that could have worshipped her, while all crowded round her (as you do now round me) to know, whence she had drawn the high hope which had been so strangely verified? whence it was that she drew the auspices that cheered her to laugh in triumph, while every heart beside sank in its fear—a fear which was a mockery to her unearthly and strange merriment!

"She held up the child to us, which had drawn nourishment from her breast. 'There is a mark on his brow-ye may see not-but I see! . . . There is a sign on his forchead, inscribed by a hand unseen, that ye may interpret not, but which I divine! . . . Were your bark to shiver to fragments on the blind rock !- were the rage of the elements to battle for its destruction, (sea with sky, wind with wave, contending !) yet they should not prevail! Where this infant head reposes over this wild, far billow, safety for you rests! It may lay its head amid the distraction of this watery roar gently as on the pillow of this breast, for harm nor wreck can reach it here! . . . Danger may one day hem its path. I see through the dim vista of years bitter trials for which its destiny shall cruelly preserve it! Fear not! the walk of ocean is a safe path to it, and to you! that destiny, even now, carries on its unutterable and fearful work! Looking still to the future, piercing the gloom impervious to mortal eye, it regards this infant head-it shields it with fearful care, the care of a parent—and all that move near it! It extends over it that "cruel" preservation even now! Ask not why I say "cruel"—it is enough for me to know—it will be enough for this future sufferer to know! Ye cannot call it so, for ye are safe; and no mortal steersman led ye out of the horror and the bonds of those icy mounds, and snatched death from your helm."

"We gazed on her in silent astonishment, and eyed the infant with a mixture of fear and curiosity that determined me never to lose sight of it, in order to witness whether the Egyptian's words should be brought to pass through time. I scarce had the power to withdraw my gaze from the child, for a secret presentiment told me" . . . and here the old man involuntarily started as Renmore's form presented itself in the passage leading from the back of the house, by which way he had entered. Fortunate for him had been his delay, as far as avoiding Quandish's scrutiny. Emboldened, at length, by the growing shadows, he had retraced his way to the hostelrie, and on his entrance, hearing what was going on, he had stolen forward to listen. From his superior height he was able to look over the heads of the whole peasant herd that thronged both the interior of the passage near the entrance and the porch without,-the centre of the group of Mike's auditors was occupied by the

children. He had scarcely fixed his eye on Mike than that of the latter at once was attracted to his own, and each gazed on the other for a moment spell-bound, when Renmore removed his ken and retired a few paces back, and more into the shadowy part of the passage, while the old man, having now recovered from his momentary surprise, continued his tale, ever and anon directing a significent glance towards our hero. . . . "I was saying," he continued, "a presentiment told me I should bear a part in the events of his future fortunes; I sought to question the 'fatalist,'-the Egyptian, -on his birth, his parentage. . . . And why art thou here, and whence is it thou hast ventured over the deep with that helpless burden?" I asked; nor had time to catch more from her than the words, 'Who can read destiny, nor wish to see it fulfilled? who can draw the veil from the secrets hid from mortal vision, nor would wish to prove the truth of that which his prophetic reading promises? Such was my fatal yearning! Such the truth I have learned ! . . . ask no more.' But these words were scarcely uttered than their last accents were drowned in the hoarse murmurs of the wind that sprang up. Yet a dim line on the horizon bespoke that land was now just descried, and to some it afforded hope that though the storm had arisen, they should yet be able to reach shore,

ere famine and tempest had quite done its work on them. Some, less sanguine, gave way again to their fears, and exclaimed, 'The bitterness of death is doubled! with the haven in sight we must yet meet with destruction! Is it for this we have been saved from the by-gone peril! Our preservation was surely but mockery.' . . . And well had those who spoke thus cause for their dread . . . for it seemed as if the elements fought for the bitter prize of our destruction,-it seemed as if some spirit of ill exercised its rancour in contending for the doom of our ship and every terrorstricken being she contained. Woe worth the hour! I shall never forget it,-how the lightnings seemed to dart through the gloom, as if to shew the phantom of death on his way to snatch us. Woe worth the hour! I am yet bewildered with the deafening roar of the waves as they rose mountain high and dashed over our decks. . . . Without most or sail our hulk drifted on, reeling like a drunken being with its helpless freight-ourselves and our lamentations. . . . But a lightning streak has lit up one countenance, which pale in its deep resolve* looked forth on the black and turbid water-looked round on our shuddering and bewildered forms, and smiled! While in the sinking

^{*} Palluit audax, the most beautiful picture in Horace: it represents Europa.

murmur of the blast, ever and anon that wild shout of unearthly glee-that fearful laugh as though braving the elements-as though mocking their threat and angry roar-arose. That brow of resolve, that laugh of confidence, were those of the Egyptian . . . and away the vessel scudded fearfully before the wind. I could have stood and gazed on her for ever, forgetful even of the din and distraction around me, when all consciousness of my condition was drowned by the violence of the storm with which I was now dashed on the rocks, where the vessel at length drifted. On coming to myself and opening my eyes whose face should I meet but that of the Egyptian! Did I not tell you the gulf should be mocked of the prey it yawned for? Not one of your comrades is lost! Your vessel has been dashed on these rocks, but no soul has been sacrificed. Awake! arise! thank the destinies that hover round this child," (and the old man's eye glanced on Renmore's brow,) " which have been potent enough to shield yourself and your sea-mates. Arise! follow me, and recruit your wasted strength at the spot where I shall lead you.' At the same time she placed a leathern bottle to my lips from which I drank, and with what little strength I possessed I crawled from the projecting rock where I had been thrown, as I cast one last look on the shattered hulk of the

vessel, whose forecastle was, as it were, impaled on the projecting peak of a huge rock, or rather wedge of rock, that thrust itself out into the sea. As I followed my guide, I inquired after the fate of my comrades, and learned 'that they had been rescued together with herself from their peril by the timely assistance of some fishermen on the coast; and that I myself, having been flung on the rock from a different point of the wreck, had escaped their notice, but that she had remembered the interest with which I, above my comrades, had sought to know her tale, and had accordingly come to look for me, and offer me relief and recruital.' By the time she had finished making this communication to me, we arrived at the rude gipsy tent raised within the verge of a wood not very far distant from the coast. A loose curtain of faded cloth served for a door, and after having entered she motioned me to a seat on an old chest, while she took her station near a low fire which she fanned with a fir bough, until it began to blaze up with greater strength. She then gave me some food which she prepared, and which I subsequently found was supplied her by some members of a gipsy sisterhood, to whose body she appeared to belong. After my strength was somewhat recruited, I recurred to the subject of our eventful and perilous voyage, its disasters, and our miraculous escape. 'And this child?' I exclaimed, 'this infant,' for she now appeared again with the child in her arms, (and the eyes of Renmore and old Mike here involuntarily met,) 'is the guardian spirit to whom thanks are due for our delivery! think you,' I asked, half alarmed, half incredulous, 'the same event would not have awaited our perils, and rescued us from them, had that child of fate not been among us?"

"The look of reprobation and surprise, as it were, at my guiltiness, yet more than presumption, with which she regarded me, I shall never forget. . . . 'Incredulous!' she replied, after a moment's pause; 'if you have not witnessed enough to assure you that certain heads are the care or the scorn of certain destinies, keep watch on the path through life of this fatally-preserved, but not, therefore, happy being!' and she held up the child as she spoke; while I gazed on it with increased awe and marvel, as I asked 'what were the fates for which it was marked out, and which she had hitherto so truly foreseen."

drew in his breath, as he listened with an interest that absorbed him, and a painful anxiety he could not explain. The rustic group, too, pressed nearer to Mike, and asked with earnestness, "What were they?—what did the Egyptian say?"

"No, no!" said the old man shaking his head, with a look of repugnance no less than reluctance and sorrow, as his eye glanced hastily from Renmore to the group. "No, no! why should I utter what may yet,—what I would wish may yet never come to pass?" And before they could proceed to reiterate their request on this point, he hurried on to the conclusion of his tale thus:—

"I followed the path, I kept in view the fortunes of that child from that hour. Its parents, from whom it had been kidnapped, I restored it to, (and here Renmore involuntarily started;) and though its wandering and adventurous spirit, as it grew towards boyhood, led it to abandon those parents and that home," (and as the old man spoke he now fixed his eye again significantly on Renmore:) "though through the mazes of his fortune he has eluded the search of his nearest and dearest friends and kindred, yet never has he eluded the vigilance of my one keen, constant watch! which has traced him when he thought no eye was upon him,-which has followed him where none would have looked for him,-which has detected him when he has been concealed from all others! I follow him, I watch him, for his good-for his succour! . . . with a hope that the destinies that have yet preserved him have not done so for his ultimate harm. It is the mighty working of fate that I am watching,

and I see!... but away with ye, my friends, I have told you my tale,—ask no more. It were well for my doubts and fears if they recked as little of harm concerning the goings of this child of fate as ye do,—ye who are ignorant of him, and his path of life!" And here for a moment the old man sat silent, with his eyes fixed on some phantom of the brain, that seemed to rise before him and address itself at once to his regret and fear.

"Well!" he exclaimed, at length awakening from the spell which had bound him, "the day cannot be far distant when my search will have tracked its object to the end of its flittings! . . . it evades and bewilders me less and less! . . . it meets me through the gloom of fate more and more palpably—well!"

And his eye, accompanying his words, wandered from the vision on which it had seemed but now to gaze, till it met Renmore's, where it fixed itself and remained for a moment or two, looking with a significance where fear and sorrow still mingled, till it was hastily withdrawn, as the old man now made his way hurriedly from the porch. The crowd involuntarily shrunk back with Jock at their head, and made an avenue for his exit; and as they gazed on him with staring eyes and lips apart, their awe was too great to admit of their any further questioning him.

CHAPTER XIII.

"Twas partly love, and partly fear,
And partly 'twas a bashful art,
That I might rather feel than see
The swelling of her heart." COLERIDGE.

Renmore had scarcely aroused himself from the spell in which Mike's glance, and the dangerous meaning it conveyed, had held him, than he, too, withdrew from the passage where he had but now stood to listen, and retired to his room. The crowd was too busily engaged in its own rude comments on the narration it had just heard to take any notice of him or his movements, and he withdrew as unperceived as he had come. If there were some few amongst the group that, piquing themselves on their superior sagacity to the rest, were inclined to exhibit their scepticism on any stories where destiny is concerned, they formed but a small proportion. The greater number, of which was Jock, were pleased, with more submis-

sive minds, to bring forward various illustrations of the veracity and cogency of such circumstances as they had just heard in many a "strange coincidence," "singular dream," and "unaccountable presentiment," which they related one to the other after their fashion. The children, with the ruder swains, male and female, amongst the group, dwelt with delight on the glittering colours in which Mike had portrayed his adventures, and were unable to satisfy themselves, in sufficiently lauding the marvels it exhibited.

The din of their voices had scarcely died away, than Renmore had sought his pillow for repose, for it was now growing late; but in vain. The figure of the weird mariner haunted him, and his significant look and keen eye still seemed bent on him; while the various circumstances of the story he had heard suggested to his mind the question whether the old man meant to apply them to him? For what other inference than this could he draw from the marked manner in which the narrator had addressed them every now and then to himself? And then he coupled with them the warning that had so startled him on his first meeting with the weird mariner, and which increased the perplexity of his thoughts on the subject. He was determined, at the earliest opportunity, to seek out Mike, (who appeared, at any rate, friendly

towards him,) and obtain from him some clearer insight into his reasons for applying to himself the circumstances of the narration he had delivered. As usual, he endeavoured to quiet the apprehensions that a constant presentiment of ill suggested to his mind by mocking at Mike's story as the chimera of superstition, while a pleasanter solace vet was afforded him in a recurrence to the thought of Gertrude. Since the period when we last were in his company and that of the Beauty, a period now of more than ten days, their interest in each other, together with their acquaintance, had strengthened; and the determination also had now become stronger in his mind of making her those proposals of an alliance which his love for her had suggested, even on a much earlier acquaintance. He might then fly with her to a foreign shore, and mock at circumstance. An additional incitement was offered him to come to this conclusion, by the feeling how precious were the moments which he was passing in her presence; for he never knew how soon he should be forced away from the spot and from her. Constant, it may well be imagined, was the vexation occasioned him by the gratuitous attentions of that well-meaning but mischievous lady, Miss Howbiggen. "By heavens!" he would exclaim impatiently, as he was compelled politely to decline her repeated attempts "at drawing him

out." "By heavens! this good person will not be quiet until she has either forced me into those perils of publicity I am so anxious to avoid, or driven me from the spot altogether!"

This last, however, was a difficult conclusion to arrive at, held to the place as he was by the spells exercised over him by charms such as those that, while be thought of them, recompensed him for every moment of mental suffering-whether edged by remorse, or conscious guilt, or the pang of that dark apprehension of danger that fury-like ceaselessly goaded him. The more he shrank away from the advances made to bring him forth from his "fearful privacy," the more eagerly had he sought the Arcadia, both spiritual and real, to which his passion for the lovely herd-mistress sweetly called him away, as he followed the wild and sunny mazes of her mountain-track. The blossom-crowned brow of banks that fringed the stream,-the mosaic work of chequered mosses, green, yellow, and hoar, with which Nature's hand had pranked the hill-brow,-the shadowy silent glades, where streamed the sun-ray through the wood vista, as if to cheer the dream of the dark labyrinth-the russet dells,-the wild steeps, all golden glittering with the vellow broom-flower, or purpled with the heath-blossom,-what were they to him? What were all the beauties of this fair district,

soft or sublime however, unless endeared by the presence of her that would have invested a wilderness even with charm for him? No; it was not in the light of those lovely scenes that his heart sunned it, but in the smile of Gertrude, that reflected his own—that gazed on them with him, in the free and innocent gladness of her guileless spirit—and yet more, in the confidence of that pure as bright affection that repaid his own.

Not more chequered, however, was that wild pathway he tracked with the lovely herd-mistress, with its light and gloom-now winding over the slope-now sinking immersed in the murky shadows of overhanging crags-than the dubious pathway of his existence. Even when gladdened by her companionship, the thoughts of that peril and pain in which he stood would occasionally sweep, like storm-clouds, across his mind, and momentarily hold him contemplating them in gloomy abstraction, while the sweet as simple girl by his side would look on him with a gaze of mute wonder and awe, as the colour waned on her cheek, till it was again lit up by seeing its usual cheerfulness once more animate his countenance, while their eyes met, too, in the smile of mutual confidence.

But, on stole the sleepless hours of the night, when, at the first break of dawn, he rose, and advancing to the casement where the sun-rays streamed in, he threw open the window, and stood looking out off the ruddy eastern heavens and the fresh matin scene before him. The dews wide glittered, all rosy tinted in the light, like ruby gems some fairy hand had shed, and the odours of herb and flower poured up the grateful steam of their incense; but neither the lustre of the one nor the fragrance of the other yielded joy or balm to him. Nature wide poured her song of love and glee not more in the carol of her feathered woodchoristers than in the strain of joy that seemed to rise from all the gladsome blossoms that crowned her brow, from the murmur of those sparkling brooks, and the rapture of all created things, smiling through that morn of lustre! Forlorn, indeed, must be the heart that has no spark of joy which may shine in glad contagion with all that lustre around,-that has no note of happiness within it to respond to that challenge of harmony and rapture. So felt Renmore, as he now proceeded with his toilette; and by the time he had finished it, the voices of rustics in the adjoining farm-vard, and the shrill, clear cry of chanticleer "oft times renewed," proclaimed to him that the little world of Buttermere was once more afoot and astir on its happy, no less than homely vocations.

A light step was now seen brushing away the dews of the lawn on which his casement looked.

Her brow was fresh as Aurora's herself; her buskined step as light as that of the huntress goddess's, and the roses that breathed their fragrance beside her way, and those ruby-tinted dews which she skimmed, seemed to Renmore's eye to win fragrance and lustre from her lovely presence. "It is Gertrude," he said, "she is on her way to the homestead. I'll go down and try to quiet this turmoil of spirit in her presence." So, he descended the staircase, while Gertrude had entered the farm-yard from the lawn, through a door in the paling that divided it from the garden at the back of the hostelrie. Scarcely had she entered the homestead than the clear, shrill call of her horn brought the kine to the shed, where one of the hinds, whose duty it was to assist her in the charge of the dairy, proceeded to milk them, ere she drove them forth to pasture. As she was engaged in superintending this, her rural duty, she was a little surprised at the presence, at so early an hour of her mother's "distinguished guest;" while as he approached her he observed, smiling,

"Ah! you see, Gertrude, the thought of the Beauty of Buttermere' would not let me sleep a wink more for the life of me! So up I rose; and somehow or other, I find myself as usual where you are. As if some magnet had involuntarily

attracted me to wander where I now am—the magnet of your charms, Gertrude! And I confess I could not see you cross the lawn to your dairy here without coming down to wish you good morning, and look at your homestead, which as yet I have not seen."

"Indeed, Sir, you honour much our humble homestead," she replied, archly; "and since it was this which you came to see,—for you require too much from my credulity, when you express that a thought of my poor self disturbed your rest,—why, I shall be much honoured in shewing you over it."

"No, no, I declare-" said Renmore, smiling. as he was about to defend his sincerity, when she arrested his words by directing his attention to the various objects she now pointed out in succession to him, while in the smile that played over her countenance, a modest consciousness of her power over his heart was mingled with the pleasure of obliging. The order and neatness of the stalls and the beauty of the cattle put him in mind of some of the "interiors" he had witnessed in Switzerland and part of Holland; and the neatness, also, economy, and cleanliness of the dairy on which the fair herd-mistress justly piqued herself, was not seen by him without recalling to his mind Homer's descriptions, (for he was a man of education both in classic and modern lore,) and eliciting from him the approbation so justly due to Gertrude's management, and which it was no mere compliment to pay her.

Having passed through the inspection of all that part of the homestead that came under the Beauty's immediate superintendence, Renmore now beheld her proceeding to lead her herd forth on the down pastures, and the magnet that had attracted him thus far to her side relinquished none of its power as he followed her trace. "You are blessed, Gertrude," he said, as he paused and looked back on the homestead they had left, and the maze of beauty around; "you are blessed in having a home amidst scenes of such splendour and loveliness. I feel as I look on them that they are the abode of joy and peace, and that I could live in them till my dying day with pleasure, and wish not to pass beyond their happy bound."

"The scenes are well enough," she replied, with a graceful seriousness tempering her usual archness; "but it is the hearts and affections that dwell in them that can alone render them the seat of true or worthy happiness. And where does not, Sir, (to use the words I have heard yourself express to me,) the "taint of circumstance" spread to infect the content you speak of!" And there was a certain significance in her words that he interpreted as applying to her own feelings and situation.

"True, it is true enough that such is too frequently the case," replied Renmore, looking at her with a regard of inquiry as to the reference of her words, while he continued—"but such a taint as you mention has surely never made its influence felt in Gertrude's peaceful home? Unless," he added, "you would say that the repugnance I understand you to feel as regards the addresses of this preacher—this Quandish—occasions you to express yourself as you do?"

"No, no," she said, hesitatingly, "it was not exactly that which suggested the remark at the moment . . . though, indeed, it were of itself sufficient reason to have done so. . . It was not that;" and the blush stole over her cheek as she turned her face away to conceal the confusion of which it was the involuntary witness.

"Not that? what could it have been, then, that suggested such a remark? How can circumstance ever have tried the spirit or damped the heart of one that has lived so far from the sphere of its wasting influence?"

"No, no!" she replied, suddenly, "indeed I have no cause to complain of my home, of my lot in life . . . but——"

"But what, Gertrude? what obstacle to its flow (but such as I suggested) can the stream of your happiness have encountered? What struggle can that guileless, that pure spirit have ever known? Is it possible that a perturbed thought can find place in a bosom whose beating can alone be tuned to peace, whose strain these calm as lovely haunts alone respire? What care-cloud can have passed across the sunny joys of that pure maiden heart?"

Gertrude was silent a moment, when again she replied hastily, as if desirous to turn aside the subject of remark upon which she had involuntarily entered—" None, none!... why should you, Sir, imagine so? I merely was speaking generally, merely generally...."

"I thought so! I thought so!" continued Renmore, willing to relieve her of her evident embarrassment, as he continued, "Your remark just now was just. Every spot, after all, derives its real charm from the power that dwells within us, of reflecting its challenge to happiness. You cannot want this power, unconscious of the trials of life, living in the affections of all, possessed of charms where all hearts must bow—ay," and he added, smiling, as he looked back on the homestead they had left, and the premises attached to it, "and the Beauty of Buttermere has other possessions than her charms to boast of, though not so dazzling."

"Nay!" replied the Beauty, gladly seizing the challenge to resume her usual archness, as she laughed, "Nay! the most dazzling! I have heard Dr. Esdaile say that the charms you now speak of are the greatest of 'female attractions.'"

"Indeed!" replied Renmore, smiling, "I fear Dr. Esdaile is a little too just in his estimate of social sordidness. A complexion of roses and lilies is bewitching doubtless; but doubly so, when 'gold' gleams for the 'roses,' and 'silver' for the 'lilies.' But you, Gertrude, combine all these attractions, and are consequently 'formidable' indeed! Fortunate will be the suitor that shall win such treasures of person and purse. . . Out of so many as she must have, my Gertrude's heart must be not a little puzzled where to make its choice?"

"And consequently relieves itself of the embarrassment by dismissing the thought of all of them!" she replied, laughing; "Ay! one and all!"

"What? is it so difficult, then, to fix the choice—is it so difficult?" he continued, as he took her hand, which she passively gave up to him as he arrested her attention by the increased earnestness and impassioned tenderness that now marked his manner. "Is it so difficult not to understand where the heart whispers its choice would rest! Out of thousands I should know where mine would! And, should I rightly interpret the language of those eyes that seem to ask me, Where? what answer can I make them, but in telling Gertrude I can love none but her—that I can live for none but her—that the hand in which her own is held is given her together with the heart that—"

She was here suddenly recalled to the consciousness of his having taken her hand, which, led away by the tacit interest she felt in what he said, she had involuntarily yielded up to him; and which she now withdrew, as a sense of the discrepancy of her situation and his own now again recurred to her, in that conflict with the whisperings of her heart to which we have heretofore borne witness.

"And—hold, Sir!" she replied; "think you that a poor humble village girl is not conscious of the great distance that must separate her lot in life from that of one of your station in society,—a circumstance which deprives you of the right of speaking to me thus?" she continued, while the blush now of virtuous pride mantled on her cheek and exhibited her to Renmore yet more lovely in the light which it shed there to enhance that of beauty.

"Then it is on the account alone of our discrepancy of station that you forbid me to speak—on this account alone?" he repeated, anxiously; and when she hung her head in silence as hesitating what reply she should make, he continued, "Then I am to bless myself in the dear thought that it is not because you reject my love for you that you forbid me to speak! it is not that . .." but here his words were stopped short by a circumstance that, in checking them, damped too the glow of that rapture of heart, and hurried him

from his momentary elysium back to the dark consciousness of his real condition and its perils,

Across the rugged and narrow path, then, which our hero and Gertrude were pursuing, the gnarled trunk of an hoar and aged oak protruded itself, upon the lower part of which something kept flapping backwards and forwards as the wind waved it in passing. It was on that side of the way on which Renmore was, and was not seen by Gertrude, more especially as we have described her head as being drooped as he was uttering the words to her that had just escaped him. As he was speaking, it flapped in his very face, and startled him as he looked up and saw that it was a leafnot of the tree-but of paper; in fact, a leaf it may be said out of the book of Fate itself, the first ominous letters of which, as they met him, were those of "REWARD." A thrill of horror shot through his frame, and though he had presence of mind enough instantly to snatch down the placard (for such it was) and convey it unseen to the breast pocket of his dress, yet so startled and confounded had he been at the suddenness of the warning that untowardly met him in the moment of happiness which he fancied he had snatched from fate, that his voice faltered, and his step tottered; while Gertrude, looking up in his face with alarm, betrayed the secret of that return her heart made to love, as in her concern for him she exclaimed

What is it affects you? are you ill,—dear Sir?

"Nothing—nothing, my sweet Gertrude!" he replied, rallying as well as he might, and endeacuring to regain his composure. "Merely the effect of the extreme heat. I suppose . . ."

"" Yes! yes! you are not well,—the colour wavers on your cheek. Sit down on the bank here one moment." ... And ere he could reply, she can and filled a small horn-cup which she carried with her, from the pure lymph of a little torrent that ran brawling down the steep a few paces further on, chasing its way from the natural basin whence it welled at the hill summit, and winding in a thin spiral and silvery column down the crag side, at last flowed smoothly onward through the hollow below, till at last it formed the boundary, as we remember, of the garden of the Traveller's Rest.

The period of her absence, brief as it was, afforded Renmore time, however hastily, to glance over the placard, which ran as follows:—

" £100 REWARD.

[&]quot;Whereas, the notorious impostor and forger, Hatfield, is possed to be lurking about in disguise in the neighbourhood Keswick; the above sum will be given to any person or perwho shall deliver him into the hands of justice."

He hastily crumpled up the paper in his hand, and thrust it again into his breast-pocket as he exclaimed, "Is it so, then? Mike's intelligence when I first met him was too true! and the danger is stealing closer and closer to my haunt. . . . What shall I do? . . . How can I fly from the spot where Gertrude is—where all that makes life worth struggling for, I may well say, exists in her?—especially, too, when I had just wound up successfully this negotiation of the heart with her. And Fenton too! Perhaps these blood-hounds are not quite on my heels yet. . . . Yes, yes; they must be. I must see Mike again, and ask him what he"

But here the lovely girl returned with her tribute of the fresh cool flood, stainless and pure in its translucent crystals as herself.

"Thank you, thank you, my sweetest Gertrade!" he said with an intenseness and sincerity of feeling he had even yet scarcely felt. So sensible was he at this moment in particular, that though a whole world was in array against him for the sacrifice of his life, there was still one being that felt for him, with him,—there was yet one that loved and cherished him! "Thank you, my kind, beloved Gertrude! I am better."

"Oh! I am happy, very happy to see you are well again; but drink this fresh, cool water, it will

recruit you much; in truth, the heat is great." And as she spoke, he took the cup and drank, if merely to support the impression on her mind that he had suffered from momentary indisposition; though, in truth it may be said, he was well pleased to take it at her hands as a token of her return of his affection, and success in the suit which he had such cogent reasons for prevailing in. And now they walked on again, and he was about to state to her, in continuation of the words which we have witnessed so disastrously broken off, that-" in all probability, circumstances would oblige him to leave the village, but that he would write to her to join him, in order that they might be united by the bonds of the church; with many more assurances of his love for her." But all that he would have said was prevented by the appearance of a party of people coming along the Buttermere and Keswick road near which they were, and which rendered it prudent for Renmore to step aside more into the fastnesses of the crag behind. Gertrude, on her part, was not unwilling to be alone, rather than be seen in company with " the gentleman," which circumstance would have awakened the stupid and coarse surmise of the group that now shortly passed her. This turned out to be composed merely of a party of farmers on horseback on their way to the cattle fair at Cockermouth;

and some of them recognising the lovely herdmistress, greeted her after their rude fashion as they passed her.

"Why, bless us, if yonder be not the Beauty of Buttermere!" cried one worthy, with mouth and eyes alike distended.

"Hah! Missis Gertrude, and how do ye?"
uttered another; "and how does the good dame,
Missis Wetherby?"

"Pleasant day. Good day to ye, young Missis," said a third. To all of which greetings she gave her usual kindly reply, as she smiled to witness the oafish stare they each and all bestowed on her charms.

This rustic cavalcade having passed, she continued her way along the hillocks, while Renmore having now descended on the other side the height, pursued a narrow and devious lane that suddenly brought him, by a way he had never been, to the village. He stood at the threshold of it, irresolute whether to advance or retreat again into the wilderness of the rocks. . . . "Perhaps I shall see Mike," he said to himself, "if I proceed,—I will go cautiously. If any circumstances of danger meet me, why then it is time to retreat. I will venture onwards, for I am not prepared to quit Gertrude ere yet I have imparted to her all I would say." . . . Thus reasoning with himself, he

proceeded, cautiously looking round him, until now he had advanced by a side approach to the projecting window of the public room of the Traveller's Rest. He looked warily in-when back his step shrunk as if a serpent had been suddenly detected in his path, and but just in time to avoid his stepping on it and arousing its hostility. In a word, it was fortunate for him he had exercised caution in his advance; for but a glance at the person he had perceived (unseen himself happily) assured him that the hand that had fixed the placard on the oak trunk, and which he had torn from it, was not far off. The face that met him was but seen in profile, as the person to whom it belonged sate with his back nearly turned from the window; but a glance of that profile was sufficient for the quick eye of Renmore to enable him to recognise his deadliest foe and persecutor. Away he shrank from the window, and retraced his steps with what speed he might to the same lone and rugged pathway by which he had entered the village. He pursued its windings through a chasm in the crag, and which led him in a different direction to that by which he had come.

CHAPTER XIV.

"Where, save the rugged road, we find
No appanage of human kind;
No hint of man, if stone or rock
Seem not his handywork to mock
By something cognizably shap'd;
Mockery, or model roughly hewn,
And left as if by earthquake strewn."

Wordsworth.

Renmore wandered on, until he arrived at a dreary, desolate spot beneath the naked height of a cliff whose sides were full of dark cavities, occasioned by the falling away of masses of earth. Large, uncouth slabs of rock lay strewn about, their barren brows tufted with wild weeds and briers that waved in the wind. This wilderness of rock seemed like the waste of an ancient amphitheatre in ruins. It was a savage and forbidding spot, and, like his fortune too, awakening only sensations of dearth and peril; and while yet he was occupied with the gloomy associations it

awakened,-and how he was driven to shun the wolf "man" in wilds barren and forbidding as that before him, -he was startled at suddenly witnessing emerge from the rock-side, or rather grow out of the rock, a gaunt and pallid form, as if itself, too, of stone. It was a very denizen of the wilderness, and a birth of stone! It stood weird and lonely amidst the savage arena of broken masses of rock, and motioned Renmore to follow it, as it advanced to a rude door opening into one of those cavities or recesses in the cliff-side already mentioned. Our hero, though not much given to superstition, could scarcely at the moment, and in the turbid state in which his mind was, believe that what he saw was not an apparition. He stood motionless and examined it. It waved its hand, and beckoned to him to follow it into the aperture, or cavern-mouth. The dimness of the light did not permit him to scan the features of the figure, which looked yet more gaunt and vast, just as objects appear enlarged through twilight. Unwilling to give way to any suggestions of alarm, warranted by the consideration that this figure might be that of some enemy who was about to entrap him,he followed the movements of the phantom rather than man, till he saw it enter through those murky jaws of the aperture. He passed that dim threshold of rock; and there, by the light of a small, ironmounted lamp, he beheld standing on the opposite side of a table, constituted of one solid slab of stone, the somewhat "questionable shape" of the ancient mariner; for such the "phantom-denizen" of this wilderness turned out to be.

"And you have lingered thus long about the precincts of this spot after the warning I whispered in your ear on my first meeting you on the summit of that very cliff that towers above us," (for it was there Renmore had met the geologist and old Mike.) "I do not often speak my warnings thus in vain!" And the countenance of the aged seer, for such he seemed to be, wore a mixed look of reproof and sorrow as he spoke.

"No, indeed!" replied Renmore; "your warning, so far from being lost on me, has excited my constant and painful vigilance. I indeed have this day learned how true it was!"

"And do you hesitate to fly from this dangerous spot? Do you yet sport on the brink of fate?"

"I should long ago have doubtless listened to your warning, but that circumstances, feelings, affections perhaps, which I could not altogether control, have held me back. But I have been taught this day that any longer delay is dangerous—may be fatal—and yet I am scarcely prepared to quit this spot so abruptly; there is one I would

have wished yet to have seen, and spoken but a word to, ere I hastened away."

"And think you I knew not the spell that has had, and still has, power to combat my warnings for your safety? Think you the searching eye of old Mike has not seen you when you least thought he was watching your movements, loitering away the moments in the sunshine of that fatal beauty that charms you to your doom?"

"What! Gertrude betray me?" hastily interposed Renmore.

"No, no! I meant not that. She is of too noble, too pure, too generous a spirit to harbour a thought of perfidy or meanness. It is you who would betray yourself. As for Gertrude, she loves you too well!"

"Then any danger, any doom, were lightened of its suffering if I thought that Gertrude would feel for me. But how know you that she loves me?"

"Have I not seen her on the hill with her herd, when you were not as usual by her side, cast many a wistful glance to the spot where you were wont to approach? . . . And this is the girl whose destinies you are about to involve in the terror of your own!" And his accents trembled as he spoke, in a mingled tone of ruthfulness and regret.

"Old man, speak less in these dark and fearful riddles! I understand you not! I would lay down my life for Gertrude!—and the good-will you shew towards me were unworthily entertained in my behalf, if I were capable of doing aught to endanger so much loveliness and innocence!"

"It were in vain to explain myself further to you, since I well perceive you cannot relinquish her. . . . I cannot alter either the tendency of your destinies or your love for her."

"My destinies! I understand you! Can I do otherwise than suppose, after that dreary warning you gave me on my first meeting you, that you signified any other than my own fates in those of that child which your late narrative portrayed so fearfully?"

"If that narrative bears a true reference to yourself," replied the old mariner, solemnly, "would you not be involving her in your own peril?"

"If it be true!" exclaimed Renmore. "Forgive me, Mike, if I speak somewhat impatiently. I am sensible of the concern, the goodwill you express, and have manifested towards me; but am I to place implicit credence in a tale which the world would but account as the birth of so much vain and fond superstition?"

"You say"-replied the old man, calmly, and more in sorrow than in anger at what he considered the "infatuation" of his companion—" You say that you have this day had reason to find my warning true; and, yet, the blindness of your attachment, while it would willingly lead you to hope for safety, if only for the sake of Gertrude, still suggests to you that my fears for your doom may be all unfounded and visionary. . . . And so, it seems," he continued, after a pause, "you have at length encountered your enemy? You have seen Quandish? You have seen the preacher?"

"Seen Quandish!—seen the preacher!" exclaimed Renmore, in surprise. No, I have not seen him,—I have never, indeed, seen him! Would that it had been the preacher and no other that I saw! In a word, it was my deadliest foe I came in sight of; but I shrank back speedily and unseen by him; and in my retreat from the village I thus found my way at length hither."

Old Mike looked at him with a smile of incredulity, as he shook his head and replied—" Did I not tell you, in my first timely warning to you, to beware of the seeming harmless guise under which religion might cloak the worst of guile and malice? Your bitterest foe, the being you saw and shrank from this day, was the preacher—was Quandish, and no other!"

"Impossible! or dwelling here at the spot, as he does, I surely must have seen him ere this."

"He has been absent from the first day you were here until now, searching for you as near as Keswick, where he deemed you to be: but if you doubt it, follow me, and I will afford you an opportunity of ascertaining the truth without endangering yourself."

So saying, the old mariner suddenly rose from his seat, and extinguishing the flickering wan ray of the lamp, as he had now reached the threshold of the cavern, he strode forth, phantom-like, once more upon the rock-strewn wilderness, followed by our hero, in the direction ultimately of the village, with mingled feelings of curiosity and apprehension.

CHAPTER XV.

"I mine eyes will rivet to his face,
And after, we will both our judgments join
In censure of his seeming."

SHAKSPEARE.

The way was long and devious which the old mariner took, and the scene was now clad in the twilight-grey mantle of evening. As they proceeded, the conversation, on the part of Renmore, naturally recurred to the particulars of Mike's narrative, and which led to certain disclosures as to the parentage of our hero, which the circumstances of our story do not as yet permit us to unfold. Suffice it to say, he had fully elicited from Mike that his surmise was not unfounded; that the tale of his own destinies was recorded in those of the child of the narrative and its "charmed life."

The approach to the village, to which they now came, was (in the present direction) through a small wood, or copse, of Scotch firs, which belted the slope of the descent by which Mike and our hero pursued their ominous way. Having passed through this belt of firs, they found themselves on a fair and verdant glade, skirted on either side by avenues of lime, Scotch fir, horse-chesnut, and yew trees. At the end of the glade their ears were saluted by the sound of a deep sonorous voice. as of one holding forth to a multitude; and on their now turning round the corner of the glade, by which access was afforded at this end of it to the village, they came to a square brick building with folding doors, whence they perceived the sound proceeded. They both stopped for a moment to listen more attentively to the purport of the words uttered, and were at little loss to discover that they were those of a dissenting preacher; while the illlooking square pile of brick was the temple of which he was pontifex maximus.

Renmore had scarcely listened a moment to the voice before he started and expressed to Mike, in an earnest yet under-tone, "I could wager money to any amount that I know that voice! . . . True! it was the voice I heard shortly after my first arrival with Dr. Esdaile at the Traveller's Rest. They told me it was the preacher's."

"Whether it were the preacher's or any one's else, it was plain, no doubt, you knew it then; and so you seem to know it now. If you knew the voice, what say you to looking in at the door, and seeing if you know the face? You may do it unperceived by crouching behind me."

So saying, Mike entered the folding doors, which unfortunately flapped back with a loud slam as he passed them, intending to hold them open with his hands, so as to admit his companion without any noise. The congregation being all intent on the oracle before them, would have budged not an inch nor turned round a brow or bonnet to see who entered, had it not been for this untoward accident of the slamming of the folds, occasioned by their slipping from Mike's hand. In doing this, the attention of the throng was called to the door, and not only to this circumstance, but to the unusual appearance in such a place of the weird mariner. All heads were now involuntarily turned round to the man of "marvel and of mystery," while the more godly of the audience felt certain qualms of disquietude, very similar to such as might be expected to arise at the appearance of an evil spirit on the holy ground which it profaned; for scarcely other than this was Mike accounted by the more superstitious in the place, of which body the congregation now met together was more particularly made up. Mike did not at all admire the accident which had provoked attention where he had so much desired to avoid it, and turned hastily round, as he

whispered to his companion not to delay, but follow him out of the chapel immediately.

His words were heard, indeed, by Renmore, but with an utter inability for the moment to move from the spot. A singular spectacle presented itself to the audience;-the eyes of the preacher and Renmore were fixed mutually on one another in earnest gaze, while the words of the former had been stopped short, as it were by some sudden and unaccountable cause, and hung suspended on his tongue as he stood spell-bound and fixed in his scrutiny of this new and unexpected visitant of the dissenting temple. Renmore was the first to recover from the surprise by which he had been overpowered, and ere the preacher could also recover himself and find the use of speech again, Renmore had vanished, and was now following in the wake of old Mike.

The first words he uttered to his companion were in a quick and anxious voice, "You have indeed spoken truly. But who should have imagined that the man I dreaded should have taken this guise, or disguise rather, of a dissenting preacher? I need not say he is one and the same with the person I saw to-day. I have seen my bitterest enemy in this preacher; and what is worse, was seen too plainly by him!"

" Ay! it was a small accident, but likely to do a

great mischief, that slamming of the doors just at the moment when the hand of fate should have held them still as the gates of death when once closed on the comer that enters them! . . . It was to be!—it was to be, I suppose!" said the old man as he strode forward, now trying to keep pace in turn with Renmore, who before had followed the track of Mike from his stone cell "haud passibus aguis."

"What? you have seen now enough to convince you," said the old man, "that Mike was not mistaken! I suspected, nay, I was certain, that this was the man from whom the hand-bills, promising the 'Reward' I mentioned to you on our first meeting, were distributed at Keswick. He thought, doubtless, the object of his search was there."

"So I was before I came to this spot," replied Renmore, anxiously; "and here I have seen no one till this day who could excite my alarm."

"And he till this moment has seen no one who has given him so much foul joy to behold as your-self! Did I not tell you, I say again, when we first met,—did I not tell you to beware an enemy under this guise of religion? A fugitive from justice no less than yourself, he has in this feigned character taken up his quarters at this spot, and silently viewed all things, while himself has escaped the molestation of the world under the privilege of the

sanctimonious calling he has adopted. I suspected all this of him, knowing his character as I did, since I remarked the 'Reward' that appeared at Keswick always followed this man's track! For so it was, too, at the spot he passed through previously to reaching Keswick!—A 'reward placard' was put up there also by him."

"Ay, ay; no doubt he has followed my track, and has now come up with me in the very quarter where he least expected to find me, for I had left a false direction as to my movements at the place where I stopped at Keswick. This precaution, doubtless, on my part, led him, so fortunately for me, to return to Keswick to hunt for me all this while;—meantime I had proceeded hither under a new alias or title."

"And, in truth, so well disguised, I should scarcely have known you again, though it was not long since I conveyed you in my boat from Ravenglass."

"But this Quandish," interposed Renmore, "as he calls himself, has need of disguise no less than myself, only he adds the infamy of betrayal—of treachery—to that of crime. The cloak of religion is indeed a strong and safe one under which to impose on the world! . . . Singular that while he was in pursuit of me, and my forerunner too, in originally settling himself at this spot, chance

should have directed us both in looking for a retreat to one and the same goal !"

"It was to be! it was to be!" muttered Mike; while Renmore continued—"Nor has this fiend who has taken the friar's cowl, as the old ballad has it, remained on this spot solely with a view to eluding justice,—or saving himself by betraying me,—but he has cast his 'evil eye' on that creature of light and beauty, Gertrude,—to think of that!..."

... "Ay; encouraged, too, by her mother, whose weakness he has thus taken advantage of to induce her to aid his suit. Alas! alas! if the thirst for lucre at present urges him thus hotly to yield you up and claim the reward held forth to the paltry accomplice and betrayer, as the 'price of blood,' what think you he will not attempt in order to make a sacrifice of your life, when he learns how dangerous a rival he possesses in you as regards his suit with Gertrude?"

"True, true! I expect little quarter;—though, were I out of the way,—had I never seen Gertrude, or possessed (as I trust I do) her affections,—of all men she would be disinclined to listen to him! At any rate, this reflection will be some consolation to me," cried Renmore, with the true feelings of a lover, in which all thoughts, for the moment, of the danger that beset him were lost.

To the sense of this, however, he was speedily recalled by Mike, who exclaimed—

"And now you have been rendered certain as to the dangerous presence of your enemy, whither are you about to fly?—for to loiter any longer here were madness!"

"One moment," replied Renmore,-" one moment only, to take leave of Gertrude!"

"Nay, one moment may be too long—may render the leave you would take of Gertrude longer than it were pleasant to look forward to! Anything that you would say to her, commit to me. She passes with her herd by my cell often and often. Her cause shall be dear to me as your own."

"It is my own!" exclaimed the lover, passionately. "Forgive me, Mike," he continued, "for this rash delay; but were I even in the very jaws of death, I could not pass that threshold,"—and he looked as he spoke towards the Traveller's Rest, opposite which they had now arrived,—" without telling her once more how I love her. I mean to say it would be imprudent to hurry from the spot thus hastily, without making any excuse as to the suddenness of my movements. Go on, my good Mike; I will follow you by-and-by to your cell."

But all he might say could effect little in con-

vincing Mike, who muttered to himself, "Blindly thus argues, in the face of his own safety, the man whom destiny marks for its victim! The very means of escape offered him are rejected!—the very step he thinks harmless or secure is the fatal one by which he passes to destruction!...
Well, well."

So saying, old Mike loitered for a short time outside the porch of the hostelrie, as if looking about him, to see if any persons were approaching the spot, when he wandered on, communing with himself, till his form was at length lost in the evening shadows.

Renmore, meantime, had entered the hostelrie; when, who should present himself to his view but honest Jock again, the carrier's man, who, perpetually passing and repassing as he was, "looked in" at the Traveller's Rest as often as he found he had anything to spend at its bar. To observe him, a person would have imagined at present that at least he was undergoing a labour equal to that of carrying a couple of heavy portmanteaus; but no such thing. The subject of his perplexity was of a very different nature, though apparently one quite as embarrassing to poor Jock! In a word, he was employed in reading aloud to himself, with staring eyes and mouth wide open, a paper which, being headed with the ominous words, "One hun-

dred guineas reward," will readily be recognised as another placard, placed where it was by the hand of Quandish, on the occasion of his being witnessed by our hero, at an earlier part of the day, sitting in the window-seat of the public room. How speedily Renmore had withdrawn his step will be remembered; while the pseudo-preacher being then again at the hostelrie, in order to make inquiries of its landlady relative to her distinguished guest, was doomed once more to disappointment, since that worthy dame had gone to spend the day with some friendly gossips in a neighbouring village, and was not even yet returned. Accordingly, Quandish had contented himself with putting up the placard in the entrance passage, not far from the door; after which he retreated to his abode near the dissenting chapel at the other end of the village.

But to return to Jock. Now, our Touchstone not being too much of a "scholar," read the paper with surprising deliberateness of enunciation, as if he had been spelling the words; thus—"One—hun—dred—One hundred—ahem—Gui—ne—neas re-ward" And here he made a pause, while his eye glancing over the rest, he exclaimed, "Whoy, now! if this ben't the very paper I've seen these dozen times in Keswick!"

"So it is!" said a person, in a tone of indiffer-

ence, as he came up and pretended to inspect it. "Pish! suppose we light our pipes with it, eh, Jock? what say you, my friend?" And here the clown, on turning round, recognised his former benefactor and employer, "the Colonel," who bade him forthwith go and order himself a pot and pipe, while, with his usual liberality, he crossed his hard hand with a sixpence to drink his health.

" And that I will," replied Jock, "and thank your honour;" and accordingly, with sundry accomplished country scrapes of the leg, and "awkwardly grateful" salams with the hand, Jock lost no time in adjourning to that Castalia of rustic inspiration-the tap-room. Renmore, in spite of that coolness in action which characterized him so eminently, as we shall by-and-by more fully witness, naturally enough felt, nevertheless, certain apprehensions lest the "hue and cry" should have been raised after himself within the precincts of the hostelrie at the period when he had witnessed Quandish there that day. Ardent as was his desire to see Gertrude, his step yet hesitated, as he proceeded to seek her, as the thought arose that, in case any such alarm as he apprehended had been given, he at present might be a stigmatized and denounced person, and an object of her reproach, and avoidance too, as well as of others. He stood irresolute for a brief period; at one moment he

wished he had followed Mike's advice and fled; at another he was determined to know the worst; which worst was, to him, whether any suspicion, as regarded himself, had reached the ears of Gertrude. Who was to inform him? Should he seek out one of the domestics? (for Mrs. Wetherby herself had fortunately been away all day, as already stated) or Gertrude.

" No!" he said to himself; "if I made inquiries of either the domestics or the landlady, had she been at home, I should be courting suspicion, supposing nothing yet has been said against me. And though Gertrude would be unwilling to suspect me, of all persons, of being the notorious Hatfield, yet I should rather defer a rencontre with her, until I am more satisfied that I can approach her with a confidence of her being free from all suspicion of the man who is devoted to her, and to whose attachment she responds." So saying, he turned back from the door of her sittingroom, which was a little lower down on the opposite side of the passage to that on which her mother's "sanctum" was, and was proceeding out at the porch, when Gertrude herself issued from her room, attired, as we have at an earlier stage of our story represented her, in her eventide gear. She had heard the hand of some one on the lock of the door; there was no escaping an interview.

"Is it you, Sir?" she said, as her countenance beamed with modest pleasure at seeing him thus unexpectedly. "Did you require anything? were you looking for——"

"For you! for you! my lovely Gertrude!" exclaimed Renmore, with all a lover's impatience and joy. Her manner and the tone of her inquiry had completely restored him to confidence, as he felt that she at any rate had yet received no intelligence that might occasion her to regard him with an altered eye. Meantime he thought he would venture a little further in quieting his apprehensions, lest she should have seen the placard lately in the passage.

"You have seen no paper, have you, Gertrude, lying about?" and here he pretended to be looking about, as if in search, as he held the candle over the floor.

"Did you drop it here?" she replied, unconsciously, as she also joined in the search.

"Yes; somewhere in the passage here;" and he continued, as though searching.

" No; I have seen no paper at all; but I will inquire of the servants --- "

"Oh no, oh no, love!" replied Renmore, interposing; "it is here, I declare; it was a banknote! I was almost sure I had dropped it in coming into the passage." And here he pretended to pick up the desired note, while be thanked Gertrude for her assistance. And he now withdrew down the passage towards the entrance at its back into the garden, followed by Gertrude. The moments were precious; ere many more winged past, the house, he considered, might possibly be surrounded with persons to apprehend him. "I must, for her sake no less than my own, delay no longer; if I preserve myself, it is as much for her as on account of my own wretched existence. I must make some excuse or another to her." . . . These thoughts passed rapidly through his brain, while he now continued aloud, and in a hurried tone, as he clasped her hand in his own, "Gertrude, love! Gertrude! I am glad to snatch a word with you, for it is possible I may be hurried away from you this very evening."

"What I are you going to leave us?—and so hastily!" interposed the lovely girl, while the waning colour on her cheek bespake how little acceptable the intelligence of Renmore's departure was to her.

"The illness of a friend, my sweet, (such was the excuse that suggested itself,) may possibly render my immediate departure necessary. I am all anxiety to proceed to the village post-office—to lose no time in opening any letter that may arrive, and I can suffer no one to go but myself. . . . The post surely ought to have come in ere this—though it is often late. Possibly, however, there may be no letter; or if one should arrive, it may bring better tidings than I expect. Do not doubt, sweet," he continued, as he wiped away the tear that gathered in her eye; "do not doubt, if I am called away, but that I will return as speedily as possible, but I hope there may be no occasion—"

But ere he could clasp her a second time wildly to his heart, and press his lips to her own, the sound of voices, proceeding from persons entering the porchway, warned him to delay no longer, as he now turned forth upon the lawn. He had quickly crossed it, together with the bridge of the little brook already described as forming its boundary, when now he found himself at the western extremity of that very avenue of Scotch firs, limes, and yews, which he had entered from another quarter with Mike not very long ago. He speedily arrived at the turning that led into the belt of Scotch firs that fringed the cliff in whose lone and dreary recesses the cell of the ancient mariner was situate. For a moment he paused, irresolute as to which turning to take,the one which, we may remember, led towards the dissenting chapel-or the upward one that conducted to the haunt of Mike.

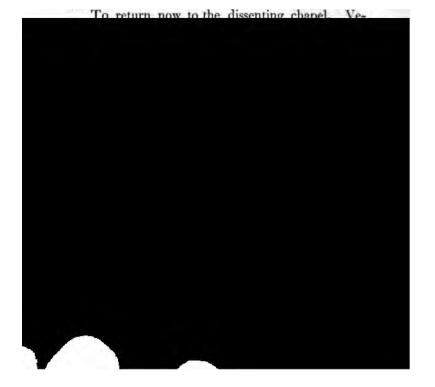
"To-morrow!" he exclaimed to himself, "it may

be too late to see Gertrude. Not see her again! Is it an infatuation that whispers to me that the sentence of death itself could not be worse?-that I could not suffer more pain at the thought of surrendering myself to death itself than forego the hope of seeing her again?" . . . And here he paused a moment, and then stamping with his foot upon the ground as though his resolve had been taken, he said, hastily, "There is but one way by which to extricate myself. It is to grapple with the danger rather than shun it. fortune and peril grow stronger as we succumb before them. Endurance and defiance can make the severest evils comparatively light!" . . . So saying, he proceeded, with hasty and impatient steps, making his way through the shadows of the trees, growing, as they were, yet darker and darker in the deepening hues of evening.

CHAPTER XVI.

"Tis a sure key with which thou may'st unlock
The inmost secrets of the hearts of men."

SHARSPEARE.



buted towards the stipend he elicited for his preaching accomplishments should know how far maculate he himself was; not only as originally a participator in crime, but branded, further, with a vet baser imputation-namely, that of being a betrayer of others. The same sage reasons, also, as regarded the "good-will" of dame Wetherby, and the subtle game he was playing with respect to her daughter, rendered it the height of impolicy to pursue any measures that might be accompanied with exposure to himself. His object was to lead his victim, if possible, to the pit that was dug for him, where others might then secure him, and the ungracious task of betrayal be, apparently at least, removed from himself. His agency, in fact, was to be the "cat's-paw," to draw the victim into the meshes, where he could only escape with the forfeit of life.

The extreme seclusion that Renmore had observed since his sojourn at the Traveller's Rest had preserved him totally unknown by sight to any of the people of the village, except Jock. He was therefore recognised by none of the preacher's auditory, on the occasion of his entry with old Mike; and as for Mrs. Wetherby, the only one who could have known him, had she been there, it has been already explained that she was absent from the village that day. If this circumstance was fortunate for Renmore, it was a subject of no

small disappointment to Quandish; the more so, as he had on the preceding day been interrupted by the untoward arrival of old Mike, in the scrutiny he was cautiously proceeding to institute relative to the object of his suspicions. He had intended on the last occasion of his calling (supposing on inquiry his suspicions had been confirmed) to have at once caused her "distinguished guest to be attached" by the satellites of justice, who were but a few miles off, at Keswick.

Baffled, however, once more in his expectation, and seeing no person of whom he considered it worth while to make inquiries on the spot, he slunk away, having left the "hand-bill" already mentioned on the wall of the entrance-passage, where, however, no person, fortunately for our hero, (as already witnessed,) had seen it until honest Jock, the Buttermere carrier. How it was disposed of we have seen; and now to return again to the chapel and its preacher. Great, we said, were the "movements" of the spirit in his bosom to make an end of his exhortation, and proceed on the work he had most at heart. If the eyes of his auditory had been a short time past drawn, in surprise, to the interruption that took place at the door, on the unusual appearance of Mike and his companion, the circumstance was now forgotten, in the unusual rapidity of utterance, restlessness of manner, and haste of delivery in the preacher. At length, having dismissed his flock, he sallied forth, doubting with himself whether he should proceed back to Keswick at once, and fetch with him the satellites of justice, (whom he himself had originally led to that spot;) or whether he should betake him first to the Traveller's Rest, and try and gain a view of the person calling himself Renmore, whom he conceived to be one and the same with the individual he saw within the chapel doors. The latter was the more cautious plan, for he was not yet certain of the identity of Renmore with that of the person he required. Meantime, the delay was dangerous. Yet he did not wish to run the chance of summoning the officers of justice upon a futile errand, or to find another person than the real object of their search. Whilst thus debating with himself, as he paced with steps uncertain as his mind, now slow and irresolute, now burrying forward, what was his surprise at being accosted by the very being on whose account all this "delicate perplexity" had been occasioned!

If our hero has been witnessed tortured with mental anxiety as to the event of those fearful circumstances by which he was hampered,—if his alarm has been witnessed as justly excited in his efforts to avoid apprehension and its accompanying doom,—yet the anxiety, the dread, attaching to conscious guilt which haunted his solitary hour, all seemed forgotten, all vanished when he was brought in actual contact with others, though even his worst foes. No trace of alarm or anxiety in his countenance betrayed now to Quandish, any more than it has been heretofore witnessed doing so to Esdaile, the secret of his bosom; the harry, the torture of thought that lurked within, was all calmed to the outward eye. To look on that smooth browthat placid courtesy-that gentle cheerfulnessthat graceful ease of address-that frank demeanour -that happy dignity of bearing, little would the beholder, who was bewitched with his manner, imagine that these attributes were, but the too successful mask under which the criminal denounced by the interdict of justice was concealed. Little would be dream that an address of such frankness and marked gentility was but the decoy to lead him away from suspicion of that guile that was possibly secretly watching its opportunity to entrap him. "Such courtesy and cheerfulness-it cannot be compatible with any base design!" he would exclaim. Alas! the answer must be, that man is a "riddle," which not even himself can, in all instances, fathom or explain. Yet that such seeming incongruity of moral qualities and attributes characterized this prince of impostors,-this "Choresgus" of the band of all such actors as understand

that art is "celare artem,"-was no less certain than surprising. The riddle at first sight seems complicated. A moment's thought, however, will solve it. And why? because there really exists no incongruity, no riddle at all. The being was in himself, after all, but an exerciser of native cunning! Fraud was the principle of his motives. From a certain superiority of genius, or mental endowment, or nicer sensibilities, fraud in Hatfield wore a fairer front and a more engaging aspect; but still the real man was made up merely of cunning. All the fairer portion of his attributes were but the tinsel to hide the dross which it too often made to pass current for the genuine ore of honour, frankness, distinction, and all that seemed estimable, engaging, and praiseworthy, in either social or individual attributes. There is no incongruity, then, of moral materials in the singular character before us. His life was a piece of acting. All the fair, the specious, and engaging, it was the business of his art, his cunning, to "act" and exhibit to the dazzled and pleased eye of the beholder. Habit had made the exercise of a good bearing and frank demeanour almost a second nature. As honesty is the best policy, and as Chartres desired to have a "good name," the better to rob under its safeguard, so Hatfield assumed all that was best in his character, as one essential aid to promoting the better his designs, which were, generally speaking, to live on the credulity of people, and secretly laugh in their faces, while he extorted praise from them. They were unconsciously deluded, deceived, and delighted at once in his society. No, reader; there is no incongruity. Fraud was his one, his only real attribute; for this alone was his nature. And yet shall we utterly condemn him, and say at best he was but a pleasing, a seductive villain? Not so; if there was a redeeming trait in his character, let it, in justice, be vindicated. Yes, let it be exalted, as its due, in his well-known devotion for one who was all that is charming in spirit as in her person. He was generous, too, and brave as far as incurring hazards and responsibilities in the dangerous career in which he had proceeded, while others shrank back with dismay at the daring character of his projects. They would shrink back and avoid his perilous company. Ay, even hardened villains and accomplished swindlers would shrink back afraid to venture as he did. They would "admire" the address with which he carried his attempts into the highest circles, and would look abroad from their fearful lurking places to see their late comrade rewarded for his enterprise by the most flattering social triumphs. They saw him, with surprise and envy, courted by the great, who, for the time, little suspected the "splendid cheat"

that was being played off upon them! Such as this was his triumph of artful villany in passing himself off as a Manners at the court of the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland,-such as this was his happy manœuvre when in London, for the brightest season of his existence! He drove his curricle about town,-mixed with the gayest of the gay, in the radiant circles of wealth, of rank, and fashion's votaries! The credit he commanded by the plausibility of his address is matter of astonishment; nor is the credulity of those who took his happily made representations for truth so much to be blamed as the mastery of his art in deception is to be admired! If dissimulation means to veil the thing that is, and simulation the thing that is not, in both these phases of worldly acting he shone pre-eminent. He seemed, as regards the first, everything that was commanding, gentlemanlike, and apparently worthy of confidence. Who could doubt or mistrust him, whether he gave his address as the Honourable Mr. Manners, or the Honourable Colonel Renmore, or any other alias out of the Protean progeny that his assurance and dexterity had called into being to answer the purpose of the time? No one! As to the second feature, of simulating,-in other words, pretending

^{*} Quod non est simulo : dissimuloque quod est.

to be that which he was not,-we have said enough of his supremacy as an actor in all worldliness to render not a word more necessary. Such, then, is a fair and faithful portrait of this singular, this engaging (for so he was) individual. We have given it candidly; and have shewn that it was redeemed by the nobler and more exalted features of fearless enterprise in his calling, of high spirit, that weighed not any chances of danger where the genius of the adventurer saw there was any field for his efforts. He went forward to his feats of splendid cunning with cheerful confidence, already sufficiently rewarded in the feeling that none had the same genius, nor, consequently, the same confidence in themselves, to attempt that which appeared a delight to him from the arduous character itself of its accomplishment. When once finally detected, and held up to public condemnation, his "whereabout" beset, and his footsteps tracked by the blood-hounds of justice,-that fearful predicament in which he first presented himself to us,-well may his confidence, so alive at more favourable opportunities,well, we repeat, may it have been shaken! And what was it that the circumstances through which we have followed him have exhibited as in any degree restoring that confidence to him? His deep esteem and love for that object of beauty whose memory yet throws a lustre round his name for loving

her, and whose return of his affection now alone rendered life desirable to him. Some have gone so far as to say that the engaging character of his dissimulation did in itself redeem somewhat his real iniquity and tortuousness of purpose. As in the instance of Alcibiades, they would forgive the last in their admiration of the genius with which it was supported. We, however, are unwilling either to be led away ourselves or lead others away so much as to seek to render him interesting or redeem his crime "by any such plea." We will waive that claim in his behalf, as a mere stage trick,-false as it is, though "seeming fair,"-and plead for him a nobler claim to interest, -namely, his devotion to the best, as we shall hereafter be more fully called on to attest, no less than loveliest of her sex. We will plead for him the noblest passion that can exalt man or extenuate crime. Yes; every passage in his existence as we now trace it is a tribute to her whose name sheds light over his memory! To love her was in itself a virtue, whose ray is the only light we would willingly hold up to lure the reader's eye away from the shadows that darkle around his name!

The preacher, at the unexpected appearance of the man he sought thus voluntarily presenting himself, started back dumb-foundered, scarcely knowing what to say, and conscience-stricken and

confounded at his own baseness of purpose as regarded him. Ay! the meanness of the betrayer shrank back-the sordid informer dwindled into nothingness before the frank, the open, the cheerfully courteous demeanour with which he was now accosted. The man by whom he was greeted inwardly loathed and despised him as both treacherous and brutal, while he addressed him with all apparent gladness as of a friend, happily met and joyfully welcomed. There was an easy air of superiority in Renmore, which involuntarily asserted itself in the colloquy that took place. With whomsoever he conversed, he made himself looked up to. The higher tone in which he spoke, and the air of command which his manner bore, seemed natural attributes that shewed themselves as spontaneously as they did gracefully, and challenged respect as their due. How the native harshness and vulgar insensibility of the person he now addressed shrank back then in conscious insignificance before one whom, by instinct, they owned was a superior! If anything supported the low mind and sordid feelings of the pseudo-preacher in this parley with the prince of Scapins, it was a brutal doggedness that hugged itself up in its own callousness and insensate obduracy.

As they came suddenly on each other, just beneath the lamp that cast its ray over the door-way. of the dissenting chapel, Renmore, with well-affected surprise, exclaimed—

- "Ah! Simmonds! Simmonds! my old and well-tried friend, I . . ."
- "Hush! hush! or we shall be overheard," interposed the preacher in a half whisper, half growl, as he turned away from the lamp and proceeded round the corner of the chapel along the avenue of yews where we have already met him.
- "Overheard! and what worthier topic could any one overhear than the pleasurable welcome of two old friends?" And so saying, Renmore held out his hand affably, which was shaken with an awkwardness by his companion, indicative at once of unwillingness to admit a friendly greeting from one whose betrayal he was meditating, and dissatisfaction with himself for permitting himself to be so mastered.
- "No, no," he replied, doggedly, and jerking back his hand with an ungainliness worthy a bear who has touched a hot iron. "No, no; there is no harm in two men welcoming each other; but then, I'm not known here by the name you remember me by." It is needless to say that his lately assumed tone of cant was for the present laid aside.
- "Well, then, by any name you please to suggest I shall be happy to welcome you," rejoined

Renmore with a well-feigned ignorance, and tone of good-humoured inquiry.

"Oh! they know me here by the name of Quandish," said the man churlishly, and half dropping his voice.

"And an excellent vocation you appear to have adopted. Fear not that I should by any imprudence betray you;" and he laid a stress on the word as he looked searchingly into his comrade's face, which was involuntarily drooped as he felt the dishonourable contrast his own baseness and treachery offered to Renmore's.

"Oh! you would not betray me, I am aware; but we can never be too cautious," replied Quandish, doggedly.

"Between friends such an event would be, I should trust, impossible!" replied Renmore, in a tone and with an air of frankness. "But," he continued, lowering his voice as if in the confidence of that friendship he knew so well to simulate,—"but all are not equally friendly, my dear Simm—I beg your pardon—Quandish—as yourself. I have too much reason to apprehend there are enemies abroad,—at least, of myself, (I hope not also of you as well,)—who, I fear, would scarcely hold the balance of honour so nicely as not willingly to see it outpoised by the low sin of treachery."

Every word he spoke probed to the core of his

comrade's sense of his own secret villany; though there was little feeling of compunction wounded, so far as to be taught to swerve from its dogged baseness of purpose.

"What enemies are abroad?" he answered, hastily, and with an awkwardly feigned surprise. "I know of none!"

"I have reason to apprehend they are nearer to us than is altogether safe or agreeable," continued Renmore in the same vein of delicate sarcasm. "For to judge by a placard, offering a reward for the apprehension of your old friend Hatfield, I cannot but conclude that some base spirit has been dodging my movements hither, with a view to obtain this price of my blood; nay, perhaps this baseness may be increased by the circumstance of his having been a co-partner in my—indiscretions."

His surly comrade was silent a moment, when both his native churlishness and his desire to repel either the insinuation of manners at one time, or the sarcasm at another, of our hero, now taught him to find a tongue.

"It is all very well, Hatfield," he exclaimed, angrily, as he turned hastily round, and fiercely eyeing his companion, who met his ruffian scowl with a placid smile,—"I see plainly enough you are directing your remarks against myself."

"Nay; I should be sorry to think you were conscious of their applicability!"

"What if I am conscious of it! I shall gain little credit with the world for keeping terms with such a notorious character as James Hatfield."

"Permit me to correct you there. You favoured me with setting me right as to the name you had found it convenient to adopt. I ought to make a similar disclosure to you. It is but a reciprocation of confidence between friends. In a word, James Hatfield is merged and sunk at present in a title which I hope you will find equally distinguished,—I am now Colonel Renmore—the Honourable Colonel Renmore, M.P., at your service."

"Curse on his unconquerable coolness and easy assurance," growled out Quandish to himself, when he continued to Renmore, "Have I spoken plainly enough, when I tell you I shall have no credit for keeping terms with you? Why, let me ask, should not I be benefited by claiming the reward as well as any one else?"

"Oh, certainly! I should be delighted to think that any friend of mine was benefited by my means—through my influence," he added, as he laughed. "I am sure you cannot doubt this, when you call to mind the not unpleasing experience, I hope, which you have had of my good will towards you."

And here the unfeeling churl found it difficult to crush the whisperings that upbraided him as an ingrate of the blackest dye. In the words of Renmore he was recalled to the circumstance of the latter having not very long ago taken compassion on him, and relieved him in the deepest exigency. Yes, in order to afford him the relief solicited, Renmore had actually incurred the fatal responsibility of forging a bill of exchange, the result of which was the succour of this fiend more than man-this Quandish-and his own proscription! It is true, that subsequently to this transaction, which took place in Dublin, Quandish had rendered himself jointly liable by falsely testifying a bond to which Renmore affixed the fictitious signature of the alleged principal; but this subsequent act, in which both were involved in a similar peril, did not cancel the debt of gratitude due from Quandish, or rather Simmonds, to his benefactor. He was an accomplice in guilt, indeed, with Renmore; but was he the man to betray the other, in consequence of any "compunctious visitings" on the score of delinquency? Not he! He was of sterner material,much too stern to be accessible to a thought even of gratitude-nay, scarcely of acknowledgment. It was enough for him to think he had now the vantage ground of Renmore, on whose head a price was set, and for whose sacrifice the less accomplished delinquency of others would be forgiven by the government. The immolation of our hero at the shrine of justice was looked forward to as in itself a hecatomb! He was the "scape-goat" on whose head the crimes of others were to be visitedbut softly—it must be when his pursuers could catch him! . . . This was not altogether so easy to effect as we may hereafter further discover.

Quandish soon rallied, and, with the hardened effrontery that marks ingratitude, strove, in the blustering style of his reply, to outface the consciousness of his own baseness, as he replied abruptly, and without directly answering the other, "Oh! I never rake up old stories of past matters; I only look to the present. If you had not helped me out of the scrape, I should have found other means, and—""

"I trust sincerely you would," interposed Renmore, while the other continued—

"And as to the present matter, what is it to me whether you call me a traitor or not? I can afford to bear this and worse names, if you please to heap them on me; but I cannot afford to lose the chance of turning a penny, be it in an honest way, and——"

"An honest way!" observed Renmore, smiling; "true, true! . . . I admire your honesty . . ."

"I tell you plainly, without more words, the

money would be acceptable." And here he added, with a ferocious chuckle, "Traitor! . . . why the world would say I did a public service, and applaud me for the betrayal."

"Permit me to suggest that the executioner, under whose hand possibly both you and myself may one day be doomed to fall, performs, indeed, a public service; but his office is yet loathed by the world."

"Well, well, we will not bandy arguments on that matter," replied Quandish, glad to escape from the disagreeable suggestion of the gallows, at the thought of which he trembled with a consciousness how much he deserved it. Renmore, more confident in his genius and resources of escape, smiled at the involuntary fear of his former accomplice, and despised him for it yet more, as he replied, in a tone of irony—

"Nay, where there is so much candour of avowal we have little need to bandy argument. I admire you for your frankness. Necessity is not the fault of a man, but his misfortune. No doubt the money would be acceptable—what is it?" and as Renmore inquired this, he was by this time tolerably well convinced that no appeal to the ruffian's sense of gratitude or forbearance would be of any avail.

"A hundred guineas!" ejaculated the savage, eagerly, his whole soul so much absorbed in the

thought of grasping the treasure, that he was utterly forgetful what must be the feelings of the man he was addressing, and whose blood was to be bartered for with that gold.

"A very acceptable sum!—though, after all, but a trifle—soon run through! Yet, no doubt, under pressing exigency, not unacceptable. I don't really know," he added, smiling, "whether I would not surrender myself for such a consideration, were I out of pocket at the moment!"

Quandish stared at his contemplated victim with a mixture of surprise at his apparent indifference, and a ferocity rendered more disgusting by the loathsome calculation of the sum he hoped to attain by selling his blood. Renmore continued, in the same careless and cheerful vein—

"Well, well, to leave jesting on so serious a subject—(not of course as my life—a fellow-creature's
life)—but the receipt of a hundred guineas! To
speak seriously on the matter, you shall have the
hundred guineas without the trouble of betraying
—I meant to say, of leading on the hue and cry
after me; for I might give my pursuers a tolerably
puzzling chase," he added, looking with goodhumoured significance into the half-withdrawn face
of his comrade. "What say you?"

"Gently, my gallant Colonel—what is your new name?" replied Quandish, with a brutal jocularity. You offer me no more than it is in my power to make already! You want to buy me off with----

"Oh, to be sure!" interposed Renmore, with equal ease and good-humour. "I perceive what you would say. Suppose, then, we double the consideration,—and in return for a promissory note, payable a month hence——"

"A month hence?" was the surly objection.

"Yes; for the better certainty of payment, let us fix a month hence. It would be equally agreeable to me to say a fortnight, three weeks, or even now——"

"Well, well; a month hence," replied Quandish. "The time will soon slip away," he added to himself. "But what security have I that you will not make your escape? Mark me, Hatfield! it is in vain for you to attempt an exit at any seaport! Mark me! I shall watch your movements, so that you do not escape me!"

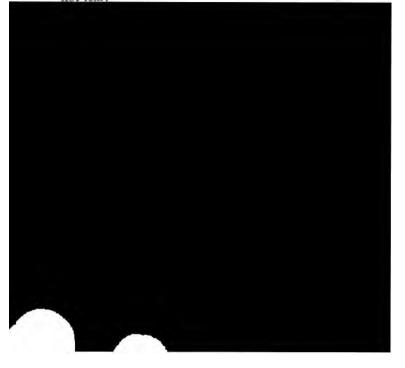
"By all means! I admire your vigilance. It bespeaks you a clever 'man of business!" You need not apprehend that I shall fail in my payment. I have various inducements to keep me on the spot!" So saying, he coolly took out his pocket-book and wrote a promissory note to the above effect, adding, as he placed it in Quandish's hand, "And in return for this, you will cancel all

those liberal bits of printed paper offering the government largess for my apprehension——"

"Ay, ay; the bills at Keswick and elsewhere shall be pulled down," said Quandish, doggedly.

"And it might be as well to suggest to the officers of justice, who may possibly be in quest of me, that there is reason to conclude the game has winged off in a different direction—in case, that is, (he added, significantly,) you should be aware of their being so occupied."

Quandish turned away from the polite sneer which characterized this suggestion, as he muttered out—"Yes, yes; it shall all be done,—you need not fear."



had been gained him through the adroit solicitation of Renmore again! The first instance of assistance, already mentioned, had been afforded Quandish at a period when he had become a bankrupt in the business he had previously followed; the last was afforded him subsequently to the transaction at Dublin, already touched on,-and how was it repaid? Why, the moment this Quandish had forfeited his situation of pedagogue by his cruelty, he addressed himself in the exigency that ensued by trying to hunt out his benefactor, now a fugitive from the myrmidons of justice, in order to grasp the reward offered for his apprehension! Of all men, Quandish, or Simmonds, was the best calculated to lead the pack in pursuit; as he was, from former acquaintance, better able to suggest what Renmore's plan of action would be. It was his invariable rule when pursuit was a-foot to throw out reports of his having moved in a certain direction, while, meantime, he "doubled," as a hare does, back to the spot of his starting. Such was the case at present. He had fled from Dublin, first of all, to London; and then, had attempted to return to the former place, but apprehending detection at Liverpool, had struck off northward, and was hotly pursued till he embarked at Ravenglass, under the pilotage of no other than the ancient mariner. He took this direction not by

any means with a view to return to Liverpoolwhither his pursuers hied in order to meet him if possible,-but to land higher up on the same coast, and adjourn across the hill-country to the neighbourhood of Penrith and Keswick. Here Quandish had traced him, calculating his probable movements: when he was thrown somewhat off the scent by learning at Keswick that no one at all answering the description in the handbills had been there. Various strangers had been there indeed, but all had gone in a different direction; or even if they had not, how was it to be asserted that amongst the various names of "Lord this"-" Sir John that" -and "Colonel the other"-that of the fugitive was concealed? All the names were of distinction. or respectability; and as for Colonel Renmorewhy it was positively asserted he had gone into the north, of course to the seat of his family-" Clanrenmore, county Caithness !" Meantime, the retired little haunt of Buttermere, nested in the mountains, seemed precisely the spot for our hero to bend his steps towards; and after wandering about the country for some time in various disguises, he at length sought a final refuge here. Singular was it that in the meantime Quandish had also sought out Buttermere as his retreat, making repeated visits to Keswick and its neighbourhood to search for the fugitive. Old Mike would

have called this collision the decree of "destiny!" At length, having despaired of "the reward," he set his wits to work, and endeavoured, by the trade of sanctimony and a vehement style of holdingforth to the ignorant peasantry, to put pence into his pocket. In this he succeeded, and in fact was speedily extolled as a favourite preacher, especially by the pious matrons of the place; amongst the foremost of whom was dame Wetherby. The preacher was of course invited to their evening teatables; and in one of these pious entertainments having seen Gertrude, and feeling the control he possessed over her mother's mind, he bethought him of proposing an alliance with her, at fit time and opportunity. How far he was acceptable to Gertrude we have already witnessed! By a secret instinct she shunned him as though destined to be the enemy of her peace, and never had her guileless and tranquil spirit known one turbid dream until it had been haunted by the hypocritic leer, the illdisguised ruffian scowl, the uncouth address, and the ungainly figure of Quandish. She shuddered and fled as he approached her parent's threshold, regarding him as something worse than man. Little need we wonder that our hero, offering so exalted at once and so engaging a contrast to a being so little acceptable, should have found no unready

access to her heart! A contrast indeed does he offer !- a contrast that renders his very delinquency interesting, as compared with the foul aspect guilt wore in the ingrate Simmonds! If we repelled any claim of interest for our hero on the ground of adroit villany, we cannot yet help feeling, in spite of ourselves, the force of the claim, when thus, again, it is exhibited in contrast with a foil so sordid! His villany is positively virtue compared to the baseness of the late schoolmaster, bankrupt, criminal, and present dissenting preacher! If hypocrisy characterizes both Quandish and his wished-for victim-yet who can look on the ruffian aspect, the churlish, moody mystery, and low, base cunning, it wears in the one, and not experience relief and breathe freely again in contemplating the engaging and graceful aspect of the gay, courteous dissimulation of the happier artist? The contrast forces itself on us, and we could not avoid a remark on it; more especially as it was so strongly, no less than reasonably, felt by Gertrude herself. But these necessary remarks over, let us pursue the conversation, to its conclusion, between Renmore and "his friend."

"Ah! I'm sorry to learn that any unpleasant circumstances arose to induce you to quit the situation,—(that of the pedagogueship,)—but it is too

often the case that these contradictions arise at a season when we feel it most inconvenient. You were nicely settled."

Little did Quandish imagine, from the careless, good-humoured tone of inquiry, that Renmore knew as well as himself the reason of his relinquishing his metier of pedagogue; but our hero amused himself with applying the lash "delicately" to the other's conscience, or sense of shame, if such an ingredient in his composition existed.

"Ahem—ahem—yes; very decently settled," blundered out Quandish, jerking his head up, and clearing his throat; "but don't let us talk of that any more."

"Not a word—not a word! Any subject that distresses a friend is no less painful to us than our own causes of regret," replied Renmore, as he proceeded in the same delicate process of infliction; of course, in perfect seeming innocence and kindly intention. "But your wife and family—"

"Curses on him!" ejaculated Quandish to himself, in a suppressed growl, as his brutal ferocity of temper here almost gained the ascendancy over his discretion. "Why, I thought you knew my wife was dead——"

"God bless me!" observed Renmore, with an air of concern, of which it is difficult to say whether it was most feigned or serious; "I am exceedingly hurt at the intelligence—her death must have been sudden;" and he cast a significant glance at the ruffian he more than suspected of being her assassin.

Quandish drew back his head involuntarily, and turned his face aside, as he muttered out the reply, "Ay, ay; it was somewhat sudden."

"Yes; her health was delicate, if I remember right; yet no treatment could have been kinder than yours——"

["Torments on his head!" exclaimed the incensed and goaded ruffian to himself; "I must break away from him. He would master the foul fiend himself!"] Renmore continued—

"And the unhappy children she left behind her. . . . Your family? . . . Are the poor little creatures well?" . . . And here Renmore's voice and manner wore too much the earnestness of kindness, and tacit reproach of the unnatural father who had deserted them, to be mistaken for acting or dissimulation.

"I wish you would ask me no more of these family matters," replied Quandish, with a savage impatience he found it impossible any longer to suppress; "they were all well enough when I last saw them. But I can stay no longer here talking;—all that it was necessary to settle between us has been done; so good-night to you."

"Good-night!" replied Renmore. "What! are you in such a hurry to quit an old friend? I should have wished to ask you to come and pass the remainder of the evening with me at my retreat at dame Wetherby's."

Of course, when he said this, our hero knew his offer would be declined; and for this reason he had lacerated the spirit of the ruffian before him, in order to be saved from his loathsome intrusion, which might have been inflicted on him had he rendered himself less an object of dread to the man.

- "No, no; I can't very well come this evening—I—I—"
- "Well, well! let me look forward to that pleasure on some future occasion. At the same time, as we shall possibly be crossing each other's path during our mutual residence in this spot, it would perhaps be as well for us to maintain the outward appearance of being strangers to each other, in order to avoid any questions as regarding one another, which might be inconvenient."
- "By all means!—by all means!" exclaimed Quandish, glad to seize at the proposal, since he dreaded as much as Renmore did any disclosure to Gertrude or her mother of himself. He dreaded any disclosure of his acquaintance in crime with "the Colonel;" and last of all, though not least,—of

the "awkward affair" of his late wife's sudden death, and the bitter tale of his deserted offspring! A mystery, doubtless, hung about the decease of his wife that he was perhaps better able to explain than any one else, and had reasons for keeping hushed. And now he was about to stride away from the tantalizing complaisance and friendliness of our accomplished hero in the art of teasing, when he was called back for a moment.

"Remember, then, the money is forthcoming at the time specified, on condition of all pursuit being immediately suspended."

"Yes, yes," replied Quandish, impatiently, and with an outward submission, too, which bespoke him thoroughly vanquished, not less by our hero's address than his own conscious guilt. "I am going to Keswick this very night."

"It is well! the moon is up, and you will have a charming ramble along the meer-side. Shall I accompany you a short distance?"

"No, no!-much obliged! I have to call at the place where I reside first — and . . . goodnight, good-night!"

So saying, the ruffian made what haste he could to avoid the perplexing path of the arch master, under whom he had been undergoing such a "spirit movement," such a castigation of his shrinking baseness.

His square, ungainly form had scarcely been lost in the shadows of the glade, than Renmore, looking after him, said, after a moment's pause, in which some reflection that flattered him was bespoken in the smile that played on his lip, " What a thing it is to possess a knowledge of human character! What man is there whose disposition has not been interpreted by me at almost a glance? Be it intuition, or what it may, it is a sort of master-key which kindly opens for me the wards of all locks that guard either conscience or character! Possessed of this, the work of making one's way in the world is easy. Have I not played with men as with puppets?" And here he shrugged up his shoulders and smiled. . . . " So now, I have once again a little breathing space; the heat of pursuit is cooled; the cry of the hounds fades from the dizzy ear of the panting quarry! It is well; I will now be myself again. These good people of the neighbourhood - Esdaile, the Lawtons, the Howbiggens, and the rest-shall have no further cause to wonder and debate about my 'distance' and habits of seclusion. And Gertrude, the thought of you, my sweet! of your tenderness and beauty, shall no more be disturbed-at least for a seasonby the endless alarm or apprehension of being dragged from your very feet to the foot of the scaffold!"

So saying, our hero proceeded along the avenue, with lighter step than had borne him many a day, in the same direction as he had come after the hasty leave he had taken of Gertrude, as described previously to his meeting the preacher. The sound of voices that had warned him so abruptly away on that occasion merely proceeded from dame Wetherby and those female gossips who had accompanied her back on her return home, and were shortly about to repair to their respective homes in the village. The brawling of the little brook that ran at the back of the premises now echoed on his ear softened through the silence. He paused for a moment, as he had now reached the rustic bridge by which it was crossed, and admired the tranquil charm of the night, as he gave himself up to happier dreams, and less alloyed with bitterness than he had experienced for some time past. "Security" had long indeed been a dream to him. Well might he answer back its peaceful challenge with gratitude, as he smiled through reflections so pleasing. And here, as he raised his head round to contemplate the sombre shadows of the Scotch firs on the hill-brow above, tinted as they were with the silver moonlight, that seemed as though it shone on them to soften their austerity, his eye was caught by a light of another description. It seemed to flit backwards and forwards, like a Will-o'-the-wisp,

along the ascent of the hill. He watched it for some little time, when it suddenly disappeared. "Can that be," he said to himself, "Quandish proceeding on his Keswick errand, with torch or lantern to guide him? Not so! nor is that the direction for him to take. Can it be old Mike's track that yonder light shines over? Old Mike! If I was inclined hitherto to be sceptical as to his superstition, may I not smile at it now? May I not tell him how triumphantly I have just combated what he terms my 'destiny?' Nay; he will be happy to hear it; for the good old mariner evinces a real interest in my safety. 1 promised to come to his cell: I wonder if he is there? I long to tell him how I have managed this ingrate-this Judas; how I have checked pursuit, gratified avarice, won myself security-all ! The night is fine, and-"

Here, as if it shone by way of reply to his surmise of Mike's being at his cell, the light glimmered forth again, and seemed to beckon him to seek it out. "It is a mystic reply, and worthy old Mike; if, indeed, it proceeds from his weird abode," thought our hero, as he smiled, while he turned now from the brook and proceeded to the brow of the hill, beneath the shadows of which his form was speedily lost.

CHAPTER XVII.

"In me communion with this purest being Kindled intenser zeal."

Shelley.

THE week had now stolen on, and the morning of Sunday had dawned. It was the day on which



graven in quaint characters, FINEM RESPICE, thus pointing perpetually to the dread hour of doom; and, at present in particular, to the hour of worship that was to prepare for it.

The chime of those hallowed bells, softened by the echoes of the meer banks, stole not more sweetly on the ear than the hallowed language they spoke stole upon the heart! And with no bosom did they sound more in concord than with that of a person who now meets us in the precincts of the village cemetery. They vibrated indeed on a heart tuned to celestial harmony-on a heart that felt the "fulness" of lofty joy at the recurrence of the present day's solemnities. Not merely, however, was it on account of his approval of religious observance and the social decorum of the Sabbath that Golefield (for such was his name) gazed on the villagers in their decent Sunday attire with lively interest; his meditations took (as was their wont) a higher flight, and indulged in a loftier view of the subject. As he looked at them with a countenance at once thoughtful and benign, he exclaimed, "The humblest in the walks of life may now be called to feelings that will raise them above 'thrones and dominions!' It is in the 'tuning' of their minds to lofty strains, the making different beings of them, that the progress 'to church' of those villagers strikes me. Yes; be religion true or false," (he continued to himself, as he wandered along through the grassy files of brier-trellissed biers,) "yet in calling the mind to themes lofty and divine, it purifies and exalts mankind, and weans him from worldly matters and the baser cares of humanity—fretful, sordid, and grovelling! Even were religion but an ordinance enjoining all 'good subjects' to listen once a week to a solemn oration, descanting on any high and glorious matter, it would be a salutary exercise for the mind, and would 'tune it' to nobler themes than those of its daily strife. It would be refined, awe-struck, filled with a rapture that is holy! It would be elevated to loftier musings than those of earth and earthly feud.—This too is religion!"

"Yes, indeed, it is religion," said an elderly and benevolent-looking person, who now came up to the philosopher and poet, (for such he was;) "but though a safe religion for minds akin to heaven, such as your own; yet, for less naturally good and sage spirits, it is requisite that the authority of heaven itself should place its seal on this high mental discipline. Man! rash and blind!—Would he (think you) listen to the admonitions, however exalted, however affectionate, held out to him by his fellow-man, unless the person that addressed him were as it were the mouthpiece of God's own oracle?"

"True, true, my dear Mr. Fenton," replied Golefield; "you know me too well to think that I could feel otherwise than you have so justly expressed. I may add, too, to your remark, that I wish the 'mouthpiece' you mention were, generally speaking, the oracle, like yourself, of love and clemency, rather than one of terror and denunciation. Obedience is better secured by awaking a sense of the first—by calling the heart to listen to their harmonies,—ay! as of seraph harps!"

"Indeed, it were better, ever," said the mild and benevolent pastor, "to take pleasure in soothing pain rather than exciting it; in holding out hope and blessing, rather than pain and the blackness of despair!" . . . But, just at this moment their attention was called to the circumstance of a venerable figure passing them wrapped up in the ample folds of a large grey cloak: his hat, with its shallow crown and wide brim, was forced very much over his brow, and his piercing eyes as they glanced keenly from under his hat rivetted attention to his countenance. He seemed to regard Fenton with a look of wild curiosity, and Golefield's countenance less so, and as though he had seen it before; for a smile of recognition just made itself apparent on his lip. He passed as hastily by as his years would permit his bowed figure to proceed; and as he now pursued his way to the church-porch, Golefield inquired of his reverend companion, "who the venerable stranger was?" "I think," he added, "I have seen his face before, but cannot recall the period, or circumstance, of our meeting."

"I fancied, too, I had seen a countenance something like his. At first, I thought, by the silvery locks that escaped from under his hat, that it was old Mike. I fancied, too, I had seen the good old mariner (for so he is, despite the rude village superstitions concerning him) in a cloak somewhat like his."

"In truth, he did bear a certain resemblance in his outward guise to my good friend the ancient mariner," replied Golefield. "But how often do we come across faces that we fancy we know, or have known, and after all they are merely features that have impressed us in some cursory glance; as we have, perchance, met them casually, amidst the wide, living 'phantasmagoria' that floated by."

And here the "philosophic dreamer" (for such, too, indeed he was) amused himself with following some train of musings or association of ideas that arose in his mind, of forms, of faces, of scenes, of conversations, he had erewhile known; when suddenly looking round for his reverend companion, he found he had left him, being called away, not only to be in readiness to proceed upon his sacred duties, but

to answer the affectionate greetings of high, low, rich, and poor, that thronged round the "good Mr. Fenton," (as we have heretofore mentioned he was called,) whose presence in the pulpit of Buttermere was on the special occasion of delivering a charity-sermon in behalf of the village-school. We remember Gertrude's advertising our hero of this circumstance some little time ago, and from her also we have been made acquainted that Fenton's "cure" (for though a long and worthy worker in the field of religion, he was still only a "curate") was at the village of Lorton, a place no less deviously than beautifully situated amidst romantic hills and crags, about nine or ten miles distant; and whither we shall, perchance, at some future period, be called on to invite our reader through the mazes of our story. The great popularity of Fenton marked him out above all others as a person likely to promote the hallowed purposes of charity by his presence and advocacy. In fact, there was scarcely a parish supporting a charitable institution in the county that did not endeavour to avail itself of the sacred services of "the good Mr. Fenton, the curate of Lorton," to promote its cause.

Golefield, on finding himself alone again, remarked of Fenton, "Ay, he is a man that induces us to love, not only piety as inculcated by our church, but the body, too, that represents his sacred calling. He is an ornament to society, and a blessing at once . . ." but here a quick trampling of feet roused him again from another fit of that characteristic musing that constantly absorbed him. He raised up his head, and beheld the objects of Fenton's advocacy at the church of Buttermere on this day,-the village school-children, dressed in their little, old-fashioned, yet decent grey coats, and the girls in cloaks of the same colour, proceeding in a file of two and two up to the church-porch. Golefield stood apart, meeting their smiling faces with a smile too of benevolence, and nodding to many a little friend whose acquaintance it had been a pleasure to him to earn with a piece of gingerbread or a handful of marbles. In fact, the philosopher was scarcely less amiable, scarcely less a promoter (" as far as in him lay") of human happiness, than his reverend friend the curate of Lorton. He was, like this excellent person, beloved alike by the peasant and the man of " prouder estate."

"It is a pleasure to see the children look so healthy, neat, and happy," said a person, addressing Golefield, as he passed on to the church. It was Routhmore; a person of a more practical mind and more ardent temperament than Golefield,—a man of as vivid intellect, but less vaguely speculative than the other was inclined to be,—less fond of

pursuing the dreams of his fancy, or the ingenuity of his reason, for the mere metaphysical pleasure it afforded. This delight, as that of a bird soaring through the blue ether, was a sufficient reward to Golefield, as indeed it is the greatest and sweetest reward to the poetical mind. Society, perhaps, may consider itself more indebted for the utility of his mental pursuits to Routhmore, who applied the stores of his lore, the researches of his mind, and the zeal of his pen, to more practical purposes. The one was carried away uncontrollably by his imagination, and by the extreme fecundity of his fancies, which dazzled him no less by their beauty than they tempted him from all neighbourhood of the practical track, by the boldness, height, and extent of their expatiation. The philosopher, or dreamer himself, was held under a charm by the spell exercised over him by his own mind. To look at him smiling through his dream, you could perceive he was beguiled to a world which he could not (if he would) consent to exchange for the practical realities of the social world around him. Few, then, could follow Golefield, or, consequently, sympathize with him. Every one must admire him; but if there was much to dazzle mankind in his speculations, there was little tangible. Routhmore, on the other hand, shaped his philosophy more to human improvement than to mere

mental expatiation. In the moral causes he advocated, no one could outstrip him in vivacity of intellect and style or ardour of feeling; but he ever adhered to the bounds of the social scope, and felt satisfied if he could win sympathy within the pale of his fellow-men, rather than sun himself in the beams of happy dreams, that, however delightful in themselves, were yet unsubstantial. The one wished as well to the cause of society as the other: but Golefield's mind was so constituted, that it indulged in a sort of intellectual Arcadia, which, as regarded the interests of society, painted life and human character as he wished to see it, and not as it well could be. Routhmore's zeal led him to combat the prejudices of man; nor less the daring presumption of man. It led him to a more reasonable code, whose beauty, in his view, was its utility, its greater practical perfection. Did empiries wish to overthrow sound institutions by rash innovations? Routhmore was the champion whose zeal pursued them to the last gasp that gave them breath to run. His vivid style, and searching, keen, and lofty argument, was ever the foremost. as it was the most effective, to expose their errors, -to shame them into a better habit of thinking. In placing the reasons for their doing so in the most attractive light, by shewing the amelioration that society, and the condition of human happiness,

would derive from abjuring their untenable scruples -he led to improvement in the most certain way. No two men, therefore, could be more essentially different in their mental characteristics than Golefield and Routhmore. No two men saw each other's mental excellences and beauties with a greater willingness to pay deference to them reciprocally. The simplicity of character of Golefield in society agreed well with his intellectual character as the "child of Fancy,"-the plaything of self-wrought dreams,-for his dreams swayed him more than he swayed or controlled his dreams; for, as we have already said, they carried him away on their wing beyond all bounds of pursuit, or sympathy from those around him. He was a feather on the wind with which they bore him. To observe him, to hear him speak, his spirit eagerly looking through his eye and countenance at the bright illusions that played before it, you felt the "thing of clay" was lost-the man Golefield was lost,-and a personification of mind, or spirit, glowed before you!

This difference of their characteristics and temperament was witnessed, too, in their countenances. The simple, benevolent look and expression, betokening happiness in itself, which characterized Golefield, was strongly contrasted with the animated, keen countenance of Routhmore. Their features were not more different than the ruddy, hale complexion of the dreamer-bard and metaphysician differed from that of the darker and more swarthy traits of the zealous scholar, critic, and moral philosopher, Routhmore.

But not to dwell any longer on this "analysis" of character of two individuals so distinguished,— (though to have said less would have been an injustice both to the reader and to them,)—we will take up the conversation between them for the few moments that the church-bells yet permitted it to continue, ere their chime should end, and warn them no longer to delay from the sacred threshold.

Golefield replied to Routhmore's remark on the cleanliness and happiness of the school-children—

- "Ay, it is a delight to see them! I view them with mingled feelings of pleasure at their happiness, and shame at myself."
- "How so? The conclusion is scarcely deducible from so benevolent and good a premise," replied Routhmore, smiling, as his companion put his arm into his, while they strolled on by the side of the children to the church-door.
- "Why, 'shame' to think that we, with all our boasted wisdom, are scarcely so truly wise as those little beings in their innocent ignorance!"
- "Nay, all humanity is imperfection; hence it is that we fail in wisdom. But, surely the exercise of matured reason renders us superior (though imper-

fect, no doubt, in our views from the very weakness of our nature) to the unmatured and tender mind?"

"Why, that little yellow-haired fellow, who has stepped out of the rank to pick a honeysuckle flower from the stem over yonder grass-green bier, is worthier of admiration than you or I!... With all our wisdom, our efforts to discover that 'moot point' to the end of time,—the 'greatest good to the greatest number,'—we are not yet so truly in possession of the desideratum—'happiness'—as that child!"

"Truly so," replied Routhmore; "the reflection certainly is humiliating to us, to think how much in vain we strive towards the light. But, to quit this vein of regret at our essential weakness as men, rather than argue that 'innocent childishness' is worthier of admiration in its happiness than 'praiseworthy effort' in its failure through human imperfection,-to quit this, let us rather contemplate the blessing imparted to these children and society by the happy system of education these 'Sunday-school' establishments promote. prospect my mind more willingly pursues is, the refinement of the spirit-the amelioration of the moral principle-the diminution of crime-the practical benefit to the country-the blessing to mankind."

"And yet—to think, my dear Routhmore, that

all this 'refining' of the spirit does but foster the growth of sensibilities which shall sharpen (it may be) the future pangs of remorse, and render the heart less happy than even it would have been in the numbness of feeling ere it was thus refined."

"This is the tax incumbent on all good, in the social or moral world. You speak too much as a 'poet!'—you suffer feeling to gain the ascendancy over reason!—you look too far! and in doing so, consider too slightly the real merits of an essential good, and a great social benefit."

" Well, you are right," said his meditative companion, with the benign smile of an assent that felt his friend spoke truly, and that yet there was also a " pleasing pain" in his own views and feelings which he would be unwilling altogether to forego. But the last chime of the bell had now sounded as their feet were on the sacred threshold. They entered, and were soon wrapt in the hallowed themes which spoke to the heart, the feelings, no less than imagination and reason. Those themes, too, won impressiveness from the bland yet chastely solemn manner of Fenton. There was a shade yet of sorrow over that benign aspect. There was a tone of sorrow also, mingling with those accents of hope and benevolence, that insensibly stole upon the hearer; while the heart, no less than the eye, followed the preacher. But there was no one of

all present whose heart or eye seemed to follow him with more deeply felt interest than those of the venerable stranger that not long ago had attracted the notice of Golefield and Fenton, as they were conversing in the church-yard. Whether there was any peculiar source of interest to this person, in aught connected with the "good curate," beyond that of the present exercise of his hallowed function, we are unable to say. Being a stranger in the place, his appearance, as may be expected, excited attention, coupled with a certain degree of curiosity to know "who he could be?" The eyes of the "good folk" present were therefore "sundry times" turned towards him, nor did the interest he evinced in regarding the preacher escape them. Nay; those who sate in a position to mark the workings of his countenance, and the expression of the old man's feature, declared they could detect a tear glisten in his eye after he had regarded the face of Fenton with intent earnestness for some time. After all, it might be but the dimness of sight, the weakness of age's vision, to which this appearance was to be attributed. Be this, however, as it may, those who can read the heart through the countenance would not have pronounced much amiss had they deemed that sorrow and regret were scarcely less marked on those venerable traits than attention to the preacher,

or devotion for the theme he uttered. But if the aged stranger had attracted any notice, it was destined speedily to be called away from him, and directed to a "phenomenon" of the other sex which now made its appearance, arrayed in a style that fully justified the transient gape of the congregation as it advanced up the aisle. During this portentous interval, even the heads of the auditory were turned away from the estimable preacher. In fact, the "phenomenon" (or "mega thauma," as old Homer would have termed it) was irresistible. Its "irruption," too, into the sacred edifice, at the advanced stage to which the service had now arrived, rendered the circumstance more conspicuous and "gape-provoking!" Of course, we must not pronounce on the merits of the fashion of a past day by a reference to that which is at present the prevailing taste; but no doubt the lady in question knew well what was becoming when she appeared in a blue satin hat lined with pink, exhibiting further two portentous rosettes of the dimensions of peonies over each ear, just as coach-horses are decorated, or rather "garnished." But this is not all. We are but a short way upon our progress to the interesting tout ensemble. A beautiful buff dress, buttoned all down the front, (the complete rage, by-the-bye-the mania of the day !) with large lilac-coloured buttons, commands next our

homage; the same, be it observed, being enhanced in effect by a rich border of lilac also, which stood out " in splendid relief" from the more sober ground of buff. Well; over her shoulders our lovely "phenomenon" wore a "charming" bright amber-coloured shawl, with a border and fringe of black; while a capacious collar, bordered with Valenciennes lace, exhibited its snow-white contrast to the amber hues of the shawl. No lady, we are confident, could survey herself in the glass in such a costume, and not pronounce herself " attractive" beyond all doubt; and to this just and laudable conclusion Miss Howbiggen (for it is herself who proceeds up the aisle before us) arrived, no doubt, when she decorated herself in it. That a little time was taken over a toilette of such "curious taste" cannot be questioned; and hence must she be excused for making her appearance at the present somewhat advanced state of the service, the psalms being nearly concluded. She was followed by her estimable brother, coughing the whole way up the aisle; as much, perhaps, from impatience at her delay, which doubtless nearly choked him with grumbling, as from any cold or weakness of trachea. His irritation was less of the lungs or throat than of the temper. But the grand question, after all, has not been solved-namely, in reference to what person in particular it was that

Miss Howbiggen had rendered herself so particularly attractive? For it is scarcely to be supposed that, however universally "obliging" her disposition was, she should have so far taken pains to render herself an object of admiration to the mere worthy but ordinary group of the Buttermere congregation. No; we cannot, then, be at a loss to pronounce that she certainly must have had "the Hon. Colonel Renmore, M.P., of Clanrenmore, county Caithness," in contemplation, as she surveyed herself in the full-length toilette glass, and emerged, like another Iris, in the resplendence of "many colours"-buff, lilac, black, and amber! . . By-the-bye, yet more, (the Graces forgive us!) we had forgotten one great essential in this costume, and as particularly exemplifying the fashion of the day,-this was, the red heel to the boot; the upper portion of which was, in the delicate and chaste contrast, yet still no less striking one. of white satin. But the "red heels" were the great point of interest in the costume of the day. just as the "high heels" or "choppines" of the olden time were in their day; and a curious account of which may be seen in "Tom Coryate's Crudities;" not to mention that this gear is memorialized in Shakspeare's Hamlet. Now, if a figure so well worthy to attract admiration as that which Miss Howbiggen exhibited was not enough to charm a

whole regiment, to say nothing of one stray colonel, we are at a loss to say what would. But alas! the contradiction of destiny !- the wayward sway of that envious law that thwarts everlastingly our fondest expectations! The very person against whom this battery of attraction was to be directed was actually out of the way-" non est inventus!" Now, Miss Howbiggen very reasonably regretted being deprived of the pleasure of seeing Colonel Renmore, since he was to be her guest that day. In fact, he had at length (according to the intimation expressed by him at the close of our preceding chapter) accepted her "advances towards drawing him out,"-that is, an invitation to dine; while Mr. Howbiggen, with characteristic bearishness, called it "worrying the man from his privacy." No wonder, then, that Miss Howbiggen was a little chagrined at not seeing our hero. Alack! to think that the curious and grateful study of that toilette should be " labour lost !" And who knows? it might be "Love's Labour Lost!" For that Miss Howbiggen had conceived a strong interest in the Colonel must already have been witnessed, beyond the possibility of a doubt. With difficulty did she restrain her impatience, and the expression of her disappointment, till the conclusion of the service; when she did so, it was to her "sympathizing" brother, -and what think you he had the grace to reply?

"He, he, he !-ugh, ugh, ugh!" (the cough and giggle were interwoven together like the dingy shades of a pair of "thunder and lightning" coloured stockings,) "the Colonel does quite right to keep away, if he doesn't wish to go to church, stranger here as he is, to be stared at. It is not every one that does make it a rule to 'go poking' to church! . . . ugh, ugh, ugh!" . . . (Another fit of coughing.) "I don't know (ugh, ugh!) whether (ugh!) I did not catch this vile cold in 'draggle-tailing' last Sunday through the wet to church after you. . . . Ugh, ugh, ugh, ugh! " But here all further colloquy was drowned in the fit of coughing that ensued in an exasperated degree; while the somewhat indignant fair one replied, with a laudable impatience-

"I shall really never hear the last of that cold!"
.... but perceiving that her words were lost on
Mr. Howbiggen, she reverted to her own cause of
dissatisfaction. "Most contradictory and tantalizing—Colonel Renmore not being present. ...
Well, at any rate, we shall have the pleasure of
seeing him to-day." So saying, she consoled herself for her disappointment, and now made her
way to meet her various friends who thronged
together—the service being now over—in their
transit from the church, to hold, according to custom, (as, reader, you may see in any village church-

yard on a Sunday,) a few minutes' conversation, ere dispersing to their different abodes.

Mr. Howbiggen hobbled after her, ejaculating with what breath he could muster, after the discipline of his coughing, "It is the root of all bodily evils, a cold, I do believe. So much fever always connected with it... That blockhead Esdaile was for once in his life right when he said so."—

Just at this moment, and as this kind reminiscence of the worthy Doctor had hardly escaped his lips, up came the little man himself, greeting his patient in his usual lively style, to the invariable disarrangement of that cynical gentleman's bilious temperament.

"Ha! cold better to-day, I hope, Mr. Howbiggen?—and how do you do, Miss Howbiggen? Beautiful sermon we have had to-day. Delightful preacher Mr. Fenton."

To all these remarks and inquiries the fair one and her brother both replied at once. The words of the dyspeptic patient being, "Ugh, not a bit better! How should a man's cold be better, hazarding his health in coming to a damp church?" So grumbled Mr. Howbiggen; while the smiling Doctor's attention was more occupied in listening to the gentler greeting of his amiable sister.

"Oh yes! Mr. Howbiggen's cold is much better!
. . . the sermon was delightful! . . . but . . .

but . . ." (glad to arrive at the topic uppermost in her mind), "I thought I should have seen Colonel Renmore at church to-day."

"Colonel Renmore!" exclaimed Esdaile. "Dear me! your mentioning his name reminds me of my sad neglect in not having, ere now, paid my respects to him as I promised. . . ."

["Lucky fellow, the Colonel," growled out Howbiggen to himself, "to be spared the annoyance!"]

"Indeed!" interposed Miss Howbiggen; while the Doctor continued—

"I have not actually been to see him since our little fishing ramble together—nearly a fortnight ago now—when I walked up to call on you. In fact, I have been so much engaged in going the round of my various patients in the neighbourhood of Keswick, that I have been unable to do so. I have an excellent opportunity, however, of calling now, so I will march forward to the Traveller's Rest, and beat up the Colonel's quarters; and, by-the-bye, he was good enough to offer mea 'frank' whenever I required one,—I will ask that favour of him to-day. But you have assuredly met him ere this?"

"No, indeed! not until this morning have his engagements permitted him to promise us the pleasure of his company."

"Oh! then, I shall see him to-day at your house.

I am delighted at that! You will find him a most agreeable person indeed! But I am surprised you have not met him sooner."

"No; on consideration," replied Miss Howbiggen, "I can now very easily understand that whilst his movements were uncertain, he thought it more convenient to decline coming out, than to have to write an excuse subsequently on finding he could not come, or accept the invitation conditionally."

"Well, that is very reasonable of you," observed Mr. Howbiggen; "vastly reasonable!—and you are willing to make this excuse now you fancy he is coming!—had he still, however, declined your advances, he would have been still a subject of idle speculation, and you as unreasonably fidgety as ever. . . . Well, I only hope, Hetty, now you have teased him into coming to dine—"

. . . " 'Drawn him out,' " if you please, into the circle, so happy to shew him due attention— 'teased' him, indeed!"

So said Miss Howbiggen; meantime her brother, taking no notice of her reproof, continued, . . . "I only hope (I beg to say) that when you have made his acquaintance, you will not have reason to repent it."

"Repent it!" exclaimed Dr. Esdaile and Miss Howbiggen both at once; the one in serious pettishness; the other, in his usual tone of good-humoured raillery; for Esdaile was never more pleased with his eccentric patient than when he was in his peculiarly morose and ursine moods. "Why, you speak," continued "Hetty," (for so was Miss Hester Howbiggen familiarly called) "as if we were about to meet a swindler or felon! Ridiculous!"

"Pish! I don't mean to say the man is either the one or the other, though there is never being certain. All I would suggest is, that I never knew any good come of being so 'mighty' anxious to see and know people! (ugh, ugh!) We always get disappointed in our expectations, and deceived in our hopes."

"Ay; but you will not be so in the Colonel, I can assure you," said Esdaile;—"the most agreeable, delightful companion I ever fell in with."

"To be sure! to be sure!" exclaimed Hetty; "for shame, brother!—this morose way of viewing men and things——"

It is everlastingly the case," continued the ascetic, in a hasty tone, "that our liking or respect for people very little improves on our further acquaintance with them! (ugh, ugh!")

"Oh, there is no fear of this in the instance of my friend, Colonel Renmore,—so good morning,

until I have the pleasure of meeting you again at dinner." And so saying, Dr. Esdaile, after having made a brief delay to pay his respects to the curate of Lorton, proceeded on his visit to our hero. The good pastor was now advancing from the church porch, surrounded by all the gentry of the congregation (amongst whom were Mr. Lawton with his fair daughter Laura) in conversation with him. They were all happy to take this opportunity of paying their respects to him, and expressing the gratification they had derived from his advocacy, feeling and eloquent as it had been, of the benevolent cause of the local charity.

The group was joined now by our friends Miss Hester Howbiggen and her brother; nor was the latter remiss (however ursine and repelling he generally was) in shewing that he, too, was sensible of the merits and claim to respect of one so universally beloved.

"You will favour us with your company, I trust, Mr. Fenton, at dinner to-day—ugh? eh?" growled out the cynic, as amiably as he could; while he continued, "to make amends for my causticity, you will have the more amiable society of all the gentlemen round you," looking at Golefield, Routhmore, and Lawton; and making also as polite an inclination of the head as he could to Miss Lawton, who leaned on her father's arm.

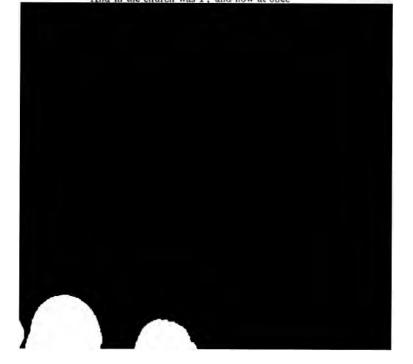
"Yes; and of Colonel Renmore too," added Miss Hetty. "I trust you will come;" and here Miss Howbiggen proceeded to hold some minor conversation with Laura Lawton. Meantime, Fenton replied—

"Indeed, I should be too happy to have the honour; but being obliged to return to Lorton to do duty this evening, I fear I must decline the pleasure of meeting so many (I may say) of my best friends." So said he, as he answered back the smile of good will and esteem with which Golefield in particular greeted him.

"Well, then, you must positively come up to the house and sit with us a few minutes," said Miss Howbiggen, with her usual "fidget" (to use her brother's ill-behaved language) of hospitality. And so, too, would he have expressed himself now, but that he seemed to make an exception to his usual unceremonious mode of carping in the instance of the good curate. Nay, what is more, he fell back in the ranks, while his sister and Fenton walked onward foremost of the party, as he muttered to himself, " Why, there is a man that it really does one good to see. He never smiles in your face to answer some selfish purpose-to cloak some design to fawn and stab! to flatter, cajole, and cheat! He is a good man, -a sincere man ;-and what is his reward? Neglect, and the postponement of his merits, according to the universal and hateful law that prevails throughout society! What encouragement is there to be good, and diligent, and conscientious, when the return these qualities meet with is mere forgetfulness on the part of the world, and neglect?" So saying, or rather ruminating, Mr. Howbiggen hobbled up to the party in advance, whom he now found, und voce, remarking on the appearance of the venerable stranger who had attended the church that morning. looked round for him amongst the group of persons leaving the church; but it should seem that he had already withdrawn himself, unperceived by the congregation, while yet the benediction was being pronounced at the close of the service, and before any movement had as yet been made to rise and quit the sacred edifice. In effecting this withdrawal of himself unperceived, he was aided by the proximity of the pew he occupied to the church door. The curiosity therefore that his presence had excited was doomed to be ungratified; and of course, in proportion as information concerning himself and his movements was scant, the conjectures that puzzled over them were manifold.

CHAPTER XVIII.

"No soul on earth must know it: not my father.
O, comrade, tell me? Is all changed around me,
Or is it only I? I find myself
As among strangers. Not a trace is left
Of all my former wishes.
And in the church was I; and now at once



formed by the jagged sides of the crag, till they found themselves on the summit of the steep.

"I have seen him, then !—I have at last seen him!" said one of the persons to the other. "The dim visions of years far retraced float faintly before me, and represent the form—the aspect—the benign smile—the countenance of love, of compassion, and gentle persuasion! . . . Sorrow had not then shaded that brow! nor regrets embittered the pure stream of those cheerful as virtuous thoughts! . . ."

And the speaker was silent, as overcome with the emotion occasioned by reflections, perhaps the bitterest of which our nature can be sensible namely, those that reproach us with having wronged the persons most worthy our love !- those that whisper in the ear of our anguish that where kindness has met us, we have slighted it, and turned away; or, yet more, repulsed it, heedless of the wound our ill-return has inflicted! Such is the wound a parent, for example, is wrung withal, in the callous indifference, or thoughtless waywardness, or yet worse, the stubborn opposition, of a cherished and darling child! Such is the wound, too, a friend is doomed to feel, when misunderstood by false pride, when misconstrued by suspicious meanness, or chilled by the yet less scrupulous outrage of barefaced ingratitude!

"Well, well," replied the other, filling up the pause occasioned by the emotion of his companion, "it is a long day to look back upon. The judgment of the offender was scarcely ripe then; and . . ."

... "Were it twice as long ago, the sense of committed wrong would yet be as keenly edged in my heart as now! I was loath to look upon his face again—I feared to view the very benignity that would be my bitterest accusation! Though I have faced dangers and braved the frowns no less of man than of fortune, I never shrank so sensibly as I did before that benevolent and revered aspect. Its kindness was a condemnation and a reproach severer to me than the combined frowns of a whole hostile world. I think it would break my heart to face it again."

And the person speaking thus relapsed into his former silence, though the mental struggle battled keenly within his breast; he seemed to proceed mechanically, as it were, by the side of his companion, scarcely knowing whither he was led, while the other again attempted to offer the rude but bootless consolation which a kind heart and plain, untutored mind characteristically proffer.

"Well now; where is the good of a man's taking on so,' when not all the fretting in the world over past faults or follies can mend matters?

If in a former day of youthful or childish heedlessness, rashness, or blind waywardness, we could possibly have foreseen the day when they should occasion so much regret to us, think you we should have been either heedless, rash, or wayward? . . . No, no; but we can't look forward! We are pulled this way and that by certain invisible agencies that play with us, look you, and twist and turn us just as they please-just as I may turn aside the track of this poor beetle you are about to step upon,"-and so saying, the person, in an affectionate, though rude manner, laid his hand on the arm of his comrade and pressed it, while he added, as he pushed away the beetle from the path, "There; and may the better destinies overhead so turn aside all the evils that cross our mortal path !"

"Amen, my good friend!" replied the other, with a solemnity little softened by hope, as he added, "But really fortune (or rather fate, as you would say) has shewn me so little favour that I fear your good wishes are but uttered in vain."

And here, being interrupted by the footsteps of some one pushing his way briskly through the tangled brushwood and thick dank sedge that fringed the bank of the water along which they were proceeding, they struck suddenly into a narrow path that wound round the crag, and so avoided all contact with the person who now came up to the spot they had vacated.

"Well! I could have declared, as I stood on the crag-top yonder, in my way towards the meer, that I saw a boat land two persons somewhere near this spot; one of which I could declare was old Mike, and the other bore a marvellous resemblance to that singular person we saw at church to-day—that venerable stranger about whom every one was asking. Well; it is odd! I was almost sure they passed up the cliff-side, as if to proceed in this direction." And here he looked about him again. "No; I can perceive no traces of them whatever;—very odd, indeed!"

The person speaking thus was of short stature and stoutly built, though active; and being rendered somewhat out of breath by the ramble he had taken, was glad to sit down on the bank and rest himself for a short period. It is scarcely necessary to say that it is the worthy little Doctor that is now before us, and whom we have here joined on his progress to call on "the Colonel," which we remember his sallying forward upon subsequently to the church-service, at the close of our preceding chapter. He sat, with his four-legged Achates Bryan by his side, looking on the glowing laketide, tacitly wishing, perhaps, despite its being the Sabbath, that he had his fly-rod in his hand.

Nor trifling, indeed, was the temptation that suggested that wish; for beneath the spot where he sate the water was deep, and what was called by anglers a "hole;" and here the finest and largest char ever delighted to disport them through its translucent mazes. He could have sate for ever, enjoying the shade of the boughs above his head, the cool "salute" of the gale that freshened from the water over his brow, the charm of the seclusion those haunts afforded,-and, yet more than all, the sight of his favourite finny game darting through the pure lucid tide below; -but this paradise of repose was not to last for ever; and after sufficiently indulging in it, he called to mind that he had no business to delay where he was any longer. set out," he said to himself, as he rose from the bank, "to call on Colonel Renmore, but was led aside from my intended path by the sudden descrial of those two people in the shallop, that have so unaccountably escaped my overtaking them! . . . Well, no matter; in rambling after them I have lighted on a famous spot for the char, to find which I would have willingly consented to ramble twice as far out of my way." And thus consoling himself, the philosophic as merry doctor or angler, or both, proceeded on his original commission of paying his respects to "the Colonel." Away, then, he hied him, followed by Bryan, to dame

Wetherby's. "Is Colonel Renmore at home?" he inquired of that worthy and demure person herself, the moment he entered the porch.

"I believe he is, Sir," was the reply; "I rather think he has just come in. I think he went to church this morning," continued the landlady, as she preceded the Doctor on her way to knock at our hero's door.

"No, no; the Colonel was not at church—but your lovely daughter was! And never did I see her looking more charming than in that pretty gipsy hat she had on. She eclipsed all her blooming maiden fellows, whose Sunday gear seemed to sit awkwardly upon them in comparison with hers. Ay, and you, too, Mrs. Wetherby, would be at church every Sunday of your life were you to hear such a discourse as Mr. Fenton gave us this morning!"

The good-humoured, plain-spoken Doctor was not too remarkable on all occasions for the "tact" with which he spoke; and so the widow Wetherby seemed to consider on the present occasion, as her countenance deepened in its shade of demureness at the kind of indirect reflection which his words seemed to convey on her attendance at the dissenting preacher's harangues, rather than the more chaste and sober discourses of the village church. On one account, too, more particularly than any

other, was the Doctor's remark injudicious, since it had the effect of arraying the feelings of the parent against those of her daughter on the delicate topic of their respective devotional notions; and Mrs. Wetherby had screwed up her lips as a prelude to a rather lengthened reply, when, fortunately for the Doctor, she was now close at the Colonel's door.

"I scarcely know," she said, "what some people may think,—but it appears to my consideration, that young persons should be guided rather by the recommendation of those who are better able to judge for them than themselves. . . ."

(" Oh, yes! decidedly—decidedly! . . . Is this the Colonel's door?")

... "Especially—ahem—in the instance of children as with reference to their parents——"

... "Certainly—certainly! no doubt!" continued the Doctor, recklessly. "Oh! I wish you had been one of the congregation to-day, Mrs. Wetherby, knowing how you delight in a fine, impressive discourse. You would have been charmed as much as myself, or as your daughter, I dare say, was. . . . But Gertrude, (I beg pardon,) Miss Wetherby, will give you a full account of it, no doubt, at tea this evening." . . .

But the sage landlady and proselyte of the oracular Quandish was too much overset by this second battery on her nerves, or prejudices, or both, to have been able to reply with perfect calmness to it, and was no less glad to break off a parley in which the Doctor spoke with so little regard to consideration or nicety, as respected her "peculiar sentiments" and feelings. Accordingly, having ushered him into Colonel Renmore's room, she departed, expressing to herself with less moderation than so rigid a "chapel votary" should have observed, as regarded Esdaile's imprudent mention of her daughter—

"This is the way that girl is everlastingly rendering me subject to the reflections of people, in consequence of her wilfully taking an opposite path to that which it should be her duty to pursue together with myself! 'A wayward son,' (as the Proverbs say,)" she added, in a truly sanctimonious twang, and à la Quandish, "is the reproach of his mother!" and I may say a 'wayward daughter'!...
But we will see how long this is to last!"

With these words, she betook her with new zeal to prepare for her evening's visit to the fane of her favourite holder-forth; consoling herself, as it were, for the "twitting" she had been sensible of, on the part of the thoughtless Doctor, by precisely acting in the teeth and in defiance of his gratuituous recommendations, and evincing herself, yet more and more, a "stanch meetinger."

Meantime, the greetings due on either side had taken place between the Doctor and his distinguished friend; with many apologies on the part of the former for his apparent neglect in not having fulfilled his promise of "looking in" upon the Colonel at an earlier period than the present day. Nor was the request for a frank forgotten, which while Renmore was, with his usual acquiescence, engaged in affording, Esdaile "talked on."

"A charming party, I trust, we shall have today at the Howbiggens'. Our host is a strange character, less really unamiable than he chooses to exhibit himself. His grumbling is, I fancy, all so much vanity!—mere indulgence of vanity, and nothing more."

"Ay, indeed! how so?" inquired Renmore, as he raised his head up from looking at the "frank" he was inditing.

"Why, having been disappointed in the career of early ambition, and feeling his talents were thrown away, and himself laid on the shelf as it were, he is determined to be a 'character,' and claim the social immunities of a 'privileged person.'"

"A proof of sad weakness of character, in my opinion," observed Renmore, as he rose and presented the frank to Esdaile; "and entirely, as you observe, the result of vanity, and a morbid desire to claim attention. No doubt, disappointment is vexatious and trying, but it is the test of a manly mind to be able to evince endurance. This will render a man much more worthy of admiration for character, than any ill-judged disregard for the usances, feelings, or even prejudices of society, which it would render the slave of its own spleen."

"A noble piece of moral philosophy; and Routhmore himself could not have uttered a finer!... Oh! you will be much gratified with some of the persons you will meet this evening."

"Indeed, it is a matter of regret" (and here he spoke sincerely) "that I was unable to avail myself of your kind offers of introduction previously; but I trust that this evening will make me amends for my disappointment hitherto."

And here an interval of interruption in the conversation took place, which was occupied by our hero and Esdaile respectively withdrawing to dress for dinner; when on their meeting again, they strolled along the margin of the lake towards Mr. Howbiggen's residence, as their conversation was thus resumed—

"An only daughter, I think you said the other day," (observed Renmore,) "Miss Lawton was?"

"An only daughter, and a charming, amiable girl, too! and I really don't know, were I what is termed a 'marrying man,' whether I

should not feel somewhat inclined to make a proposal!"

"Nay, you had better resolve at once on being a 'marrying man,' and propose the question;— especially when there are so many inducements,— loveliness, amiability, and that most splendid of female attractions," (he added, repeating the observation he had heretofore made to Gertrude,) "as the world considers it—fortune!"

The little Doctor smiled, and shook his head, with an indecision that possibly spoke, not only that he had scarcely made up his mind on such a measure, but—which would be a more serious obstacle—that he was not perhaps to the lady's taste. Whether, however, the secret of his indecision was, that "he would not if he could," or, "he could not if he would," we are unable to pronounce; though we should say that both considerations mingled in the thoughts that passed across his mind.

"Well; but Mr. Lawton, her father, what sort of a person is he?" inquired Renmore.

"A very good sort of person; but unfortunately possessed with a most mistaken notion of his own superior sagacity and talent."

"Indeed!" observed Renmore, smiling; "and in what in particular is it his ambition to shine?"

"Oh! his pride is that of being a projector of

happy improvements,—his hobby is endless experiment; which he dignifies by the name of science, or scientific improvements."

"Only his zeal or fancy a little outruns his judgment;—is it so?"

" Precisely !"

"I presume his experiment (or 'experimentalizing,' if you please) is at his own expense!" observed Renmore, laughing.

" Indeed it is; and no failure in any way lowers the worthy as indefatigable lord of Blacktarn in his own esteem! There is always some happy excuse at hand to hush any whisperings of mortified self-love. His equanimity under his self-inflicted trials is ever unshaken; and to hear him inform you of his absurdities and blunders with a perfect self-satisfaction that all failure is to be attributable to extraneous and unforeseen accidents, rather than to any radical defect in his plans, is really delightful-a rich treat!" And here the little Doctor gave scope to his merriment in an unrestrained fit of laughter at his worthy friend Lawton's expense. The contagion of risibility was irresistible, and Renmore joined in it as he portrayed to himself the interesting individual whose characteristics Esdaile had placed before him; not perhaps without considerations of the probable chance of being able to turn this "ingenious" gentleman's credulity, conceit, and good nature, to his own private account. These deeper considerations were, however, well veiled beneath the mask of that merriment in which he joined with the Doctor, who proceeded to amuse his companion with sundry anecdotes of the sagacity of the good "Squire of Blacktarn's" improving projects, with which possibly the reader may be yet more amused when, in proper time and place, he shall hear them described, and with all good faith in their expediency, by the worthy projector himself.

"And to heighten this provokingly amusing self-satisfiedness' as to his various conceits," continued Esdaile, "the oracular style of his delivery and mock pomp, or rather 'pomposity' of manner, is as transcendent as it is original!" And here another peal of laughter broke irrepressibly from the facetious Doctor, the echoes of which might very easily have made themselves audible within the walls of Mr. Howbiggen's house, at which Renmore and his companion had now nearly arrived, being by this time more than half-way up the drive or gravel-road that led to it. In order, therefore, that we may be with the inmates to receive their various distinguished guests, and our hero in particular, we will transport ourselves and the reader to Miss Howbiggen's drawing-room, in advance of the party.

CHAPTER XIX.

"You are not here! the quaint witch Fancy sees
In vacant chairs your absent images,
And points where you should be, but are not."
Shelley.

The drawing-room window of Howbiggen House commanded a most convenient view of the drive up to it; convenient, that is, for those who, like Miss Hetty Howbiggen, were fond of seeing "what was going on." No Flemish lady, with her "side mirrors" at each sash, was ever more readily informed of the "who" and the "what" were moving in front of the house than Miss Howbiggen;—of course she did not fail to discern Esdaile and his companion as they advanced to the door.

"Oh! here he must be at last!-most distinguished looking, graceful person!"

"Who is here at last?—distinguished?—graceful?—umph!—What nonsense is this? One would fancy the 'Apollo' Belvidere had descended from his pedestal, and walked up to pay a visit!" "Nay, Mr. Howbiggen, it is a figure somewhat more acceptable, I trust, than a statue! It is, or I very much mistake, Colonel Ren——"

"Oh, good heavens! that endless Colone!! He will be here quite time enough; we shall have quite enough of him when he comes, without all this anticipatory prating.—And after all, who knows? he may be merely some adventurer."...

... "For shame! Mr. Howbiggen ... do have a little respect for propriety ..." said his estimable sister, quite shocked at the freedom no less than moroseness of his remarks, which she did her best to cut short, or they would in all probability have been overheard by her "distinguished guest," (a term, by-the-bye, of which her brother declared himself positively sick,) who now entered the room ushered in by Esdaile, after the trumpet of their important announcement had been sounded by the servant.

"I have the honour, at length, of presenting Colonel Renmore to you, Miss Howbiggen," said Doctor Esdaile, as that lady acknowledged the Colonel's bow with a most distinguished curtsey, as she expressed how happy she was at his presence,—meantime she "devoured" him with her eyes. Tall, graceful figure; elevated forehead; complexion, rather pale; hair, deep brown; eye-brows, arched; countenance at once pleasing and thoughtful; contour of the face, oval,—such was the portrait

Miss Hetty scanned with a glance swift as thought, nor, it may be added, with dissatisfaction. Her brother, on his part, "bobbed down" his head, not too gracefully, but still with certain symptoms of more deference to the "social charities" than was usual with him. In fact, if a "prepossessing appearance," according to the Macassar oil advertisements, is a "universal recommendation," we may certainly say it had its effect in the present instance; and old Howbiggen tacitly acknowledged that the "variety" introduced in the ordinary social circle of country squire-archy was something like a relief, to say nothing of the contrast afforded by the easy cheerfulness and urbanity of our hero to the more boisterous spirits and noisy good-humour of the little Doctor.

"Much flattered at seeing you, Colonel,—umph! ugh!—You find the neighbourhood dull, I take it!" growled out Howbiggen; "I know I do!—ugh."

"Indeed, if it could possibly have proved so," replied Renmore, "it is to myself alone that it is attributable, in not having availed myself of your kindness and hospitality sooner. But, the fact is, I have been obliged to exercise a good-deal of self-denial."...

("Self-denial!" exclaimed Miss Howbiggen to herself... "what a charming as well as modest turn is given in that term to his declining our advances towards his acquaintance! Others would have blundered out apologies, and said many awkwardly civil things to little purpose!—charming!)"...

So thought Miss Howbiggen; while our hero continued, "But really the arrear of correspondence on public business, especially concerning a bill I shall have the honour of introducing to the house next session—"

"Entirely engrossed your attention, Colonel, no doubt!" interposed the Doctor, most conveniently winding up Renmore's apology, and sounding a chorus of conviction as it were, as to its justice, which he further wound up by saying, "Most meritorious!—self-denial!—most meritorious!"

... "Yes, yes! I know, too, from past recollections, what public business is; and what a plague anything like an extended correspondence is," said Mr. Howbiggen, who now being led upon the train of his pristine disappointments, (as recorded on our first introduction to him,) gave the alarm, by sundry preludial growls, of entering on one of his usual "jeremiads." This result, however, was anticipated and prevented by the timely interference of Esdaile, who proceeded, with his usual good-humoured raillery, to call away his sour patient from a sense of his annoyances, (at the expense even of a little exasperating him sometimes in another way,) while an opportunity was now afforded to our hero of "rendering himself agree-

able" to his fair hostess in the conversation that more freely ensued between them. Miss Howbiggen, in her way, was scarcely less a tactician than "her distinguished guest;" and being imbued with all laudable curiosity, (of which we have already witnessed specimens,) she shaped her remarks, no doubt, to the "grand end" of learning as much of the Colonel, as regarded himself, his circumstances, tastes, &c., as she could.

"You find our scenery very inferior to that of Scotland?" was her observation.

"Why, indeed," replied Renmore, deferentially, there are parts of the scenery here as fine and as sternly grand, I think, as even in Scotland."

"You reside chiefly in that country, I think?"

"Yes; what little property I have is chiefly situate there."

"In the county of Caithness?" Renmore bowed assent; while Miss Howbiggen continued—"But then we must make allowance for a little partiality. For even were the Scotch scenery less sublime and sternly grand (which it is not) than that of our English mountain-country, yet it would appear in the eyes of a Scotchman to possess greater interest."

"Yes, I partake," replied Renmore, smiling, "of the maladie du pays, and believe I feel as warmly the love of country as any Highland Clansman even could feel. But things are never in my opinion fairly viewed by comparison; each object should be adjudged according to its own respective merits."

" Very true-very accurate discrimination."

"For instance," continued Renmore, "were I to look at Borrodaile or Skiddaw, and . . ."

But here Miss Howbiggen being called on to rise to receive that estimable person Mr. Lawton, the conversation was for the present broken off. The lord of Blacktarn advanced, accompanied by his daughter, an interesting and pleasing-looking girl. She was simply attired, and her traits were rather piquant in expression, and her cheek delicately pale. She curtseyed to Colonel Renmore in the ceremony of introduction, and took her seat by Miss Howbiggen, while the "improvement-loving" squire addressed himself with a not unamusingly pompous air of urbanity to our hero.

"Delighted to see you, Colonel Renmore—ahem!—delighted!" he said, making a splendidly formal "salam," as we may call it, rather than bow. "You have long been looked for by us all; and I much regret that our poor abode at Blacktarn has not yet been honoured by your company—ahem!"

Renmore here excused himself as we have already described, and turned the conversation into another channel, expressive of the great gratification the scenery of the spot had afforded him. "Ay, Colonel, no doubt! latebræ dulces! 'mountain and meer,—ahem—are very well! very fine indeed! but I think when I have had the pleasure of shewing you another feature of the country in this neighbourhood, you will derive scarcely less gratification."

"I shall be most delighted! I presume you speak with reference to the agricultural feature."

"Precisely! . . . ay, I flatter myself," he continued, with a smile of complacency, "you will be a little surprised to witness how far perseverance and ingenuity, backed, of course, by capital——"

. . . "Of course, of course;"—and here our hero looked as deferentially solemn as Mr. Lawton's style of importance at the mention of "capital" seemed to demand.

"Ya-as; you will see what our efforts towards improving the soil have been able to effect. Barren and untractable as it had been pronounced, you will be surprised to learn that——"

"Oh, good heavens! there is Lawton boring the Colonel with his catalogue of improvements and wiseacre projects!" ejaculated Mr. Howbiggen to Esdaile; while he continued, turning round to Miss Howbiggen—"Well, how much longer are we to wait until dinner is announced?"

"We are only waiting until Mr. Golefield and Mr. Routhmore arrive. I wonder they are not here by this time!" "No wonder at all !" growled the "crusty gentleman;" "that moving mystery Golefield has only to take some crotchet of a dream into his head, and he will go on 'aeronauting' on the wings of fancy far beyond all recollection of anything so 'material' or sublunary as a dinner-party!"

"But he has Mr. Routhmore with him to bring him back, and keep a rein on him!" observed Miss Howbiggen, with a smile.

"Bring him back to dinner, too, I trust,—meantime, he must detain us no longer," replied Mr. Howbiggen. "Why, bless me, Dr. Esdaile, he would not forego one of his rainbow-coloured fancy dreams for an epicurean repast of your char even!"

"I fear not," said the Doctor, with ludicrous ruefulness. "But then you must remember he is one of our 'Genii of the Lake,' and not like the rest of us."

Accordingly, there was a move towards the dinner room, our hero handing in Miss Howbiggen, of course, as matter of etiquette; though it must not be disguised that from what little he had seen of Laura Lawton, he would have preferred offering his arm to her, and securing a seat by her side, as a companion more suited perhaps to his taste.

As for "those Genii of the Lake," Messrs. Golefield and Routhmore, they had accompanied

Fenton part of the way back on his return to his cure at Lorton, to which spot we remember he expressed that he was obliged to proceed, when he declined Miss Howbiggen's invitation to remain and dine. He had therefore taken his leave of that lady after having sate down and conversed for some little time. Routhmore, himself, and Golefield had entered into an interesting discussion relative to the comparative merits of schools supported by national and compulsory, or voluntary contributions-Golefield arguing for the latter, and Routhmore for the former. Golefield, as usual, appealing to the feelings and the spirit of charity; Routhmore, to incitements a little less optional. This topic had its rise, of course, in the subject of the charitable institution which Fenton had that day advocated at church; and so much interested were his two lay friends in the discussion, that they could not let him take his departure alone, but rambled on with him a part of the way to Lorton. Hence they have been found a little behind hand with Miss Howbiggen's half hour bell, and dinner bell too, though the portentous echoes of either might have been heard far sounding over the meer. Trusting, therefore, that they may yet find their way back to decorate the Howbiggen festivities ere they reach their close, we shall return to the dinner-table, and place ourselves with our hero

between his fair hostess and the yet fairer and more youthful Laura Lawton.

Insensibly our hero appeared to be giving up a little larger portion of his attention or remarks to the latter, at which Miss Howbiggen could not feel otherwise than rather fidgety, according to her usual characteristic, and consequently was not sorry to reclaim him to herself; with which view she recurred to the topic of conversation between herself and Renmore which had been broken off on the announcement of the Lawtons.

"You were speaking of the relative beauties of the Scotch and English mountain scenery, Colonel Renmore? I forget precisely what it was you were going to say."

"I was merely remarking, that when asked which I liked best of the two," the most reasonable answer would be, that I admired the characteristics of each, where both have so much to demand attention. If I were, for instance, to despise the Borrodaile ridge or Skiddaw, as being less sternly grand than Ben-Nevis or Cairngorm, I blind myself to a just view, not only of the mountains, but the question—"

("How pointed, terse, and clever!" thought Miss Howbiggen—"the mountains and the question!")

--- "And, consequently, lose much pleasure

through short-sightedness and prejudice, which would be otherwise amply afforded me in a due appreciation of the beauties which, in the more varied tints of mosses and foliage, are possessed in a superior degree by the English mountains. 'Do you not consider so, Miss Lawton?"

"Indeed, I am glad to see that there is something to be said for our lakes and hills, notwithstanding so many persons profess to disregard them as viewed in comparison with those of Scotland," replied Miss Lawton;—"the comparison is no doubt the error; and is, generally speaking, but a delusive standard to judge by."

"Precisely," interposed Esdaile; with whom all that Miss Lawton remarked appeared to have its due weight and interest. "For instance, they told me when I went to fish in Ullswater, that the char were large,—so they were in comparison with those in many inferior streams, but taken by themselves were poor, small things."

"Ugh!" observed old Howbiggen; "so it is in everything! A man will endeavour to undersell another, for instance, by telling you you shall have his trumpery cheaper than anywhere else!—ugh,—after all, this does not prove his trumpery cheap, but the trumpery elsewhere extravagantly dear!"

"Good! good! exclaimed Mr. Lawton, pro-

nouncing the "fiat" of his approval in his usual oracular way at this characteristic illustration, which excited a smile in the circle; while Renmore proceeded, in reply to a remark from Miss Howbiggen relative to Swiss scenery, to extend his observations to this region also for her peculiar satisfaction-

"I still speak on the same principle I observed before," he continued; "for, of course, both the mountains here and in Scotland would dwindle into nothing if we immediately recur to the Alps in comparison with them. But this again is unjust. In their way, these minor mountains have beauties with which alone, and as taken by themselves, we should be satisfied, without depreciating them, and spoiling our own pleasure, by comparisons which are out of place, and therefore idle."

"What admirable discrimination !" thought Miss Howbiggen; "and what a superior, unprejudiced person the Colonel is! He has seen all the world, no doubt, and yet. . . . no airs of disregarding his own country !"

In this sentiment she was fully met by Laura Lawton, as they interchanged glances, or "telegraphed" each other, as it may be termed, with looks that bespoke their perfect concurrence in admiring our hero's good taste, no less than discrimination.

"Hah! wellsaid!—justly said!" observed the oracular Lawton. "Colonel Renmore, let me have the honour of drinking a glass of champagne with you."

This amicable ceremony being over, the oracular lord of Blacktarn (who would put the reader, could he see him, uncommonly in mind of a certain late pompous M.P., celebrated for his cuisine) honoured our hero with addressing his remarks peculiarly to him, in token, no doubt, of his high sense of "the Colonel's" justness of views and nicety of discrimination.

... "Ya-as," he continued; "and I trust, Colonel, that when you quit our mountain region you will say, as I was about to observe to you before dinner, that the spirit of improvement and scientific experiment in agricultural enterprise have done much to render it fruitful in richer objects than 'lichens' and have bells!"

"Indeed! I am happy to understand this. There is nothing that interests me more than the progress of those efforts by which barren tracts are reclaimed, and the stubborn wild rendered a field of fruitfulness and plenty."

"I am delighted to hear you say so," replied the "experimental philosopher;" "for, do you know, that such is the bad taste of most persons to whom I have expressed myself on this important topic, that they have coldly replied (ahem!) that they cared

little about the improvement, in an agricultural point of view, of a region whose chief interest rested in its wildness, and a freedom from all reclaim to what they called—tameness!"

"It evinces a vitiated taste," replied Renmore, smiling, "to shut out any object so laudable as that which you appear to contemplate. Both features of country may be surely enjoyed without any interference with the one by the other. For my part, I should be happy to see any barren niggard tract smiling with cultivation and wealth; but whilst I admire this, I may also admire, for different recommendations, the wilderness and savage beauty of lake and mountain, tarn and woodland height."

"Admirably said!" exclaimed Mr. Lawton, in triumph; while, however, the malicious little Doctor proceeded to place a drag-chain as it were on the earnestness of his exultation, by saying in a gentle voice, in which the satirical propensity was quietly apparent—

"Stay, stay, my good Mr. Lawton. You should mention to Colonel Renmore, too, why the persons you mention spoke with regret as they did; and surely they had reason, if the wild beauties of the scenery under consideration were thus reduced to tameness?"

[&]quot;How? why? let us hear, pray!" asked Lawton.

"Because you 'improved away' all its beauties! Why, you actually, in your zeal for improvement, exercised it in ploughing up the whole side of a charming slope that had been remarkable for its lichens and drooping woods." And here a universal laugh arose at the expense of the worthy improver, who good-humouredly joined in it, while Esdaile proceeded in his raillery-" Hang it! you would rather see turnips sprouting than wild fern and moss, where the last are a necessary constituent in our scenery. Away, say I, with such agricultural tartars that would lay waste all the real beauties of the region! Two or three such 'experimental philosophers' as yourself would 'improve' the place into a mere dull scope of drains and ditches, fallow and grass-land; and instead of the 'picturesque,' would exhibit farm stock,-instead of Dryads and Fauns peopling the slope and woodland dell, we should have nothing but clod-hoppers, ploughboys, and agricultural gentlemen like yourself, stumping about the glebe in York-tan gaiters and galoshes! What do you say, Miss Lawton? Has not your prospect been spoiled for anything like a sketch ?"

Laura smiled, while her sire replied-

"Rally away as you please, Doctor;" at the same time joining good-humouredly in the chorus of merriment which Esdaile's banter had again raised; "but I flatter myself," he added, in a more serious tone, the self-complacency of which provoked a smile on the lip of Renmore, to whom he addressed himself—"I flatter myself I have done some little good in this part of the country.—' Capital!' ahem! as I said before—Capital and Enterprise, Colonel Renmore!—what will they not effect in combination?—ahem!"

"Certainly; when properly directed," observed Renmore, politely. "It is always gratifying (and he spoke sincerely, though with a different reference than Mr. Lawton imagined) to witness enterprise backed by capital."

"Ay," interposed Esdaile, in his humorous style; "and it is capital to witness a beautiful piece of water backed by a wooded slope. But Mr. Lawton, in his zeal of enterprise, must needs be longing to fell the wood; which was anything but capital. Oh, sin and sacrilege! I wish I could laugh you out, my dear friend, of this mania you have for so strangely 'improving' every charming spot I used to delight my eyes with on my fishing rambles!"—and Esdaile threw up his eyes in despair at the mischievous zeal of the experimentalist, which indeed bid fair to alter the whole feature of country where he possessed any right of property into mere tameness and nudity, as far as its former romantic charm was concerned. Happily, how-

ever, his meddlesome rashness could not extend its ravages beyond the manor of Blacktarn, which was situate on the further side of Buttermere to the northward, and therefore did not affect the features of beauty and romance that decorated either the Buttermere or Keswick district.

In fact, Mr. Lawton was one of those self-complacent, no less than indefatigable operators, that through thick and thin would proceed with what he termed "his own plans;" unable to understand (since all was "so well meant") how any one could be found to object to his efforts. Of such a character are all those quacks and empirics—those Katerfeltos—that in all ages have kept the wise in alarm as to the mischief of their pretended views of improvement, sometimes too seriously fraught with evil to permit their absurdity to be merely a subject of derision.

The redeeming virtue of the Katerfelto before us was his good-humour and hospitable feeling; and wrapped up as he was in self-complacency, the raillery of the merry Doctor passed by him "as the idle wind;" still, however, his self-love was glad to find itself flattered in the polite attention and air of interest evinced towards all that he propounded by Colonel Renmore. In fact, our hero's knowledge of character and the human heart—or, in other words, human weakness and vanity—ever

suggested that the way to ingratiate himself in a man's favour is to evince a supreme interest in whatever concerns him, or is regarded by him with feelings of pleasure or individual pride. It will not be matter of surprise, then, that Renmore was already a favourite with Mr. Lawton, who contrasted his quiet, easy, deferential, and polished style with the more boisterous manner-the "nonacquiescence" and banter of the Doctor,-very much in favour of the former. At the same time that Renmore was thus insensibly winning his way to the heart of the blind as good-humoured " experimentalist," (for which he had doubtless his reasons,) he was in reality gaining also a complete ascendancy over his mind. He knew that there is no flattery so successful as that tacit commendation afforded by deference and a well dissembled desire to be informed in what pleases another, and that "other" a vain man! In fact, Renmore saw that in a little time, if it suited his convenience, he might, to use a common expression, "do anything he pleased" with the lord of Blacktarn.

"Pleasantest person I ever met; and the most sensible," whispered Lawton to Howbiggen.

"Ugh!" replied the other in a suppressed growl;
"I hope he has had nothing to make him unpleasant."

Meantime our hero was "making his way" with

the fair heiress of Blacktarn as successfully as he had won it with her sage sire. The quickness of perception he possessed as to the tastes and turn of thought of others was only equalled by the ease with which he adapted himself to them. Hence, there were few who had been half an hour in his company that did not feel they knew him as well as if the acquaintance had been one of years. All distance of feeling was swept away, and confidence and friendship were at once inspired, not more by the frankness and cheerfulness of his manner than by the polite familiarity with which he entered on the topics of individual interest with those he addressed.

A style and bearing such as this, not only disarmed every suspicion, but flattered the vanity of all. And it received no small aid (as may be readily supposed) in winning its way in the instance of the softer sex, when strengthened by the graces of person and a handsome, expressive countenance. The polished insinuation of his address was dangerously aided by a most harmonious and well modulated voice; and further it may be added, that although with so many natural qualifications to render him acceptable to the fairer sex, these were set off to the highest advantage by a distinguished taste as regards dress, that was but a due accompaniment to

that air of breeding which he so eminently pos-

No eye was so ready to detect the "impression" he had already made on the fair heiress of Blacktarn as that of Miss Howbiggen. More than once had she directed her glance at her fair friend, in order, now, to signify to her that it was time to leave the gentlemen by themselves, and withdraw to the drawing-room; but Laura was too much occupied, as it appeared, in the conversation in which she was engaged with our hero; when Miss Howbiggen proceeded at once to rise from her seat, which of course called the attention of Miss Lawton to the summons; and these fair persons forthwith took their leave of the room.

"Mr. Golefield and Routhmore not returned yet!" exclaimed the fair hostess as she rose. "I trust no accident has happened! It is very late dinner over, and yet—no signs of them."

"Oh, I dare say," growled out Howbiggen, they will find their way back by-and-by; or if our worthy dreamer" (meaning Golefield) "has tumbled into the meer while following his aerial fancy flights, why he has his friend Routhmore to pull him out again, and the accident will be of use as a lesson to him to take care and look before him, and not so much above him—ugh! umph! Earth, not air, is the element for men, unless you

except the Germans-ugh !-- and they soar but awkwardly after all."

"You are indeed most kind in your wishes that our friend Mr. Golefield may profit even by an accident;—but I will be a little more charitable, and trust he has had no such salutary warning." So spoke the good hostess, more benevolent than her brother, whose observation, however, excited a smile on the faces of his guests, during which, Miss Howbiggen and her fair companion had left the room.

As we, together with the reader, entirely sympathize with Miss Howbiggen in trusting that no untoward accident has occurred to keep our distinguished friends, "the Genii of the Lake," so long away from their engagement to dinner at her house, we can only hope to relieve our anxiety by seeking them out. In proceeding, then, upon this laudable duty, we shall set out with them on their way in the morning, as already mentioned, in companionship with the curate of Lorton, whom his esteemed friends, Golefield and Routhmore, were escorting for a short distance on his way back towards Lorton.

CHAPTER XX.

"Well hast thou said, and holily disprais'd
These shapings of the unregenerate mind—
Bubbles that glitter as they rise and break
On vain philosophy's aye-babbling spring."
Colenings.

"To catch the contagion of joy, kindled by that sun of glory and those exulting heavens,—to bend the spirit's ear in mingled charm and awe over what mystic harmonies respire through the diapason of earth, and wave, and azure air,—to stand rapt beneath that spell, dazzling as harmonious, and feel delightedly snatched away on its glad current of splendour and blessing from all sense of self and individual care,—to feel merged in the vast tide of bliss that revels around in the bloom of the material, no less than the exultation of the animal world,—to own existence itself a blessing, and fostered in all joy and brightness, in the simple feeling of

animal revel that inspires every living thing down to the mote that dances on green and golden wing in the slanting sun-ray,-to feel all this joy, and own myself but as a bright link in a chain of universal revel and harmony,-to hail in gratitude the supreme Source of all this bliss in the mighty maze of creation's beauty and splendour in which it is reflected,-to hail it in this mighty temple of Creation, where all nature swells the strain of its praise and adoration-this mighty fane whose pillars base them on the carpet of dædal earth, twined about with her flowers, and whose roof is the azure and golden-fretted vault of heaven, whose endurance is eternal as its artificer's, and whose limits are one with all space,-thus to feelthus to contemplate - thus to harmonize and soothe the mind-thus to exalt the spirit, and view in his loveliest and sublimest form the mighty Author of all being-this is religion !- this is the true spirit of devotion with me! . . ."

And Golefield (for it was himself that spoke) paused as he looked round him on the scene of nature's rapture and glowing sunlight which had kindled this ecstacy within him, while his companions, Routhmore and Fenton, had stood smiling to hear him give expression to it in the words which we have just recited. On his returning to himself again from the spell which had bound

him, Routhmore was the first to greet him, as he observed-

"Come, come, my dear friend and enthusiast, is not a little of all this joyousness of devotion, this poetry of soul, to be sweetened with one thought too of the blessings of man in his social state? Had you been a mere dweller in the wood and wild, unreclaimed by social charities and human bland converse,' (as the bard says,) you might have spoken thus far only, in thankfulness to the Author of life, and the blessing of which it is sensible; but as a member of a social state, and intended by that same Author to occupy a social sphere, you should have added something too to your reflections that would have embraced this consideration. Not alone should you have expressed yourself glad to participate in the joy respired through all animal life, but further, that while bird, and beast, and creeping thing on earth, in air, or wave, are indeed sensible of bliss, yet Man, above them all, is sensible of it with a nobler feeling, and leading to loftier results than the mere sense of beatitude in such existence, however pleasurable! You should have expressed that in that ray which lights merely animal pleasure in the irrational world I am animated to deeds worthy a loftier spirit,-to deeds that may decorate human existence, promote the cause of intellectual and moral sway,-deeds that

may improve and exalt the social world around me, and testify the love and wisdom of the Creator in works worthy of the most exalted of those beings namely, man, social and high aspiring man—which he has created."

"True, Routhmore, true," replied the enthusiast, with a benignant smile; "yet I am not sorry to have poured forth my heart in the unqualified terms of joy that I felt at the moment, since it has afforded me the benefit that your chaster monition and more appropriate considerations, as a member of a social state, ever supply. But in good sooth, however well I wish to my fellowmen,-my fellow-workers in the social hive,-yet have I felt so much bitterness in the realities of life. that I confess I am at times glad to fly from the recollection of them altogether, and forget myself in such a dream as I have now been enjoying. The enjoyment is a harmless one, at any rate, -is it not, Mr. Fenton?" he added, turning to the good curate of Lorton.

"Yes; it is a harmless, nay, a praiseworthy one," replied Fenton, "since the spirit that kindled it was a love for the source of that happiness it rejoiced over. But as our friend Routhmore says, and I fancy," he added, smiling and shaking his head, "he is a more just philosopher than even Golefield, because always speaking with a view to

the condition of his fellow-men, as weaned from mere natural impulse to the sway of artificial life and circumstance-yes, as Routhmore says, you should have added a new source of gratulation to your 'beatific musings.' You should have felt, as he observes, that the spark of ovation, caught from the brow of heaven's light, through the world without, should but have kindled the flame of virtuous ambition within, for the sake of that Social System, and the lot of that Human Denizen, for which all these external blessings are poured forth. And yet more," added the good and sincere divine, while now the attention of his two comrades were called in pleasing, no less than respectful attention to him, "it is for me to add a stage yet further in those high outpourings of heart which you began," (he said, addressing Golefield,) " and which you extended," (he continued, to Routhmore,)-"it is for me to add that the full sum of pleasure and worship which these glorious handiworks of heaven around inspire is yet to be made up in a still sublimer and more dread consideration, -it is for me and my sacred character to invite you to hear in those dread harmonies which so much entranced your dream, my friend," he continued, addressing Golefield, "not only the ovation hymned to heaven for life and its blessing; not only the high challenge, again, to man to render himself by his deeds worthier the Divine power that called him to life; but to hear also the dread and mystic note sounding 'Hereafter,' and calling the mind to shape all its hopes, its energies, and aspirations to the Eternal World of which it warns!"

So spoke, as it was meet he should, the good pastor, as he walked along, shrined in the ray of his own virtue and benignity, with two companions worthy of him. The "halo" of spiritual radiance that encompassed them all, made their path one of "glory" and mental beatitude! If the light over Golefield's wore colours more varied and ardent from the ray in which fancy illumined it,if, again, the spark of zeal and virtuous energy shone bright, and clear, and vivid in Routhmore's, -yet they neither of them transcended the chaste and equable glow in which the good pastor's soul found cheerfulness and illumination, since in him, in particular, it was warmed with the constant thought of happiness and reward as promised by the sacred code of which he was the pure interpreter. And now they had walked on till they had reached the turning into the Lorton road, into which Routhmore and the good curate proceeded; but Golefield stopped to enjoy one more view of the lovely meer and its waters exulting in the sunlight. It seemed to him, as the breeze swelled them, that every sparkling wave as it rose

murmured forth its joy in that wide song of happiness echoed through all nature; and so intently did he stand quaffing his soul's fill of the sublime joy afforded him, that he did not perceive the presence of a fair form that had approached with light step to the spot of his musings. She remained motionless as some lovely triumph of the sculptor's art, while she regarded him with a smile as he thus, for a moment further, pursued his fancies—

. . . " And if all," he proceeded, "is so lovely here, extending as far as my mortal vision can scan, -if this visible world which reflects the Maker is so beautiful, how much more lovely must be the world in which we image his Spirit's dwelling to be! Would I could penetrate that realm! Would! the curiosity could be gratified which I feel to see worlds on worlds of enhanced loveliness and lustre! -And a bliss like this is what men call by the cold, chill term, 'death!' Heavens! how does the language of Convention disguise and dim the most delightful thoughts, and anticipations the most glorious! Where are to me the chill associations, the fearful, repelling, and gloomy thoughts, awakened in the sound of death? If it means Not to be,'-why, then, in the very oblivion it is blessing, since it is peace! but, if it is to awaken to new scenes, new glories, a new scope of existence . . . oh! well may I wish to realize in consciousness all my mind's eye now too dimly wanders over, led on to those bright heavens of its survey, from the beautiful sphere that here—even here, in this earthly realm—glows around me!"

And the enthusiast now stood gazing on vacancy as his spirit looked forth from his eyes, wildly and delightedly, on all the kaleidoscope that his fancy had, magic-like, summoned up to charm him. When at last, the spell being past, he returned with a sigh at its loss to earth and things earthly, and to a remembrance also that he had been in the companionship of Routhmore and the good curate. On looking round, however, for them, what was his surprise to behold, not them, but the fair form we have mentioned-a form which might almost persuade him he was still indulging the same fairy dream he had just roused himself from; for none of the divine worlds which he had been calling up to bless his vision could have exhibited a much brighter or fairer shape than that of her who now stood before him. It was, in a word, the lovely Gertrude that now smiled in the face of the dreamer. scarcely yet, as it appeared to her, awakened from the spell of those bright illusions with which he had just been dazzled. The character of the benign and gentle-hearted bard and metaphysician was well known throughout the neighbourhood;

and the humble peasant and rustic maiden met him and greeted him as a friend wherever he chanced to be. And so the salutation of Gertrude shaped it, as she extended her hand to the poet, who had offered his own in friendly greeting to her.

"I fear, Sir, I have disturbed you in your meditations," she said, as she looked at him as scarcely a being of this world, with a regard of mingled veneration and esteem.

"No, indeed! or if you had awakened me from them, it would only be to call me from hearing the melodies of a 'sweet-speaking' vision to those I am now sensible of in a voice scarcely less sweet, and proceeding from a source scarcely less radiant. But whom is it the Beauty of Buttermere seeks in this devious track? for I find I have wandered away somewhat from the spot where my friends left me, one of which was the 'good curate of Lorton,'—him whom I know you respect and esteem even as a daughter."

"Indeed I should be but graceless if I did not.
... But could you direct me to the path Mr.
Fenton took? for he is the person I am looking for, and have come over the hill, as the shortest way to the Lorton road, to join him. You are aware, Sir, that he is kind enough often to let me go to see him at his curacy at Lorton; and to-day he had promised to take me over with him—indeed, he feels towards

me as though I were his own child! And I confess I never was able to form a more kindly estimate as to parental feelings than that which I have learned to make as regards him."

"He is the father and friend indeed of us all!" replied Golefield, as he regarded the Beauty, whose cheek had for a moment lost its bloom of rosy light, and was shaded with a paler cast; "but Gertrude has a kind parent, surely, of her own, and whose includence is no less due to her daughter's excellence of disposition than her feelings of pride must be flattered in boasting of a child so lovely!"

Gertrude's thoughts were least of all occupied with the compliment the kind-hearted poet paid her. She drooped her head and was silent; or if her lip quivered as Golefield looked at her in expectation of a reply, it was because she felt both pain and embarrassment,-it was because she was willing to check the answer she was sorry perhaps to feel was in reality due; and if it rose to her lip, it trembled there, and died away unuttered. But her silence spoke to the penetrating and sensitive person that regarded her,-that if Gertrude had not reason to feel as much indebted to her natural parent for kindness as to her adopted one, Fenton, it was in consequence of no dereliction on her own part of filial duty or affection. And now they had arrived at a spot where there was a turning into the high-road from the point of view where Golefield had lately been indulging in his meditations. "It is difficult," he said, as he looked back for a moment, "to tear oneself from the sight of so much grandeur and beauty! Observe how the meer shews itself here with such increased charm, as glimpses of its liquid azure are afforded through the rich green foliage of the surround . . ."

But a yet more welcome prospect had presented itself to the sight of the fair person he addressed, to permit her to delay by the poet's side longer than to yield a hasty acquiescence in what he said. And she sprang forward now to meet her early friend and guide, the "good curate," whom at this moment she recognised, together with Routhmore, in the Lorton road, to the opening into which herself and Golefield had come, and whither Routhmore and Fenton had proceeded a little time past, while their companion had lingered behind to indulge in the prospect and the meditations it awakened. The salutation was indeed that of father and child, as Fenton answered her greeting in the words-"God bless you, my dear child! I seldom see you now. A week scarcely ever used to pass but you would ramble over the hills to see me."

"And willingly," she replied, "would I have come to pay my duty as I was accustomed, but

that a control, to which I am bound to submit, has discouraged me from gratifying my inclination. For never," she continued, "am I so happy as when I can snatch a holiday (as I may well call it) at my old home at Lorton."

Fenton understood, without rendering any question necessary, what was the control of which his former pupil spoke; nor was it difficult for him to comprehend why a person who, like her mother, was a proselyte of the dissenting "holder-forth" of the village, should discourage her daughter's visits to her old home under his roof. Accordingly, without appearing to notice the allusion conveyed in her answer to him, he bid her proceed to take her seat in the little equipage which a servant-lad had now drawn up to the road-side, and which had been in waiting for him at the turning of the road to Lorton. So, wishing his friends Routhmore and Golefield "good den," and thanking them for the pleasure of their companionship thus far, he drove on with his "fair child and pupil," as he used to term her, in reference to her earlier nurture under his own auspices, and was soon advanced on his way to his cure at Lorton.

To return to his late companions. "A superior girl that for her station in life," said Routhmore, with reference to the Beauty;—" superior both in mind and manner. I wonder what truth there is

in the surmise that the late Wetherby, the husband of the landlady of the Traveller's Rest, was not her father, but that she is the child of a person even as distinguished as the highest grade in society could render him? I asked Fenton how this was, one day, in consequence of hearing a remark of the Beauty's, which evinced at once a tone of mind and feeling rarely met with in the walks of lowly life, and the offspring of lowly parents, even where the benefit of education has been bestowed, as in her case."

"And he had no reply, had he, that could warrant any such surmise as you mention?"

"None in the world! though he acquiesced in my remark as to the superiority of her attributes; and said she was of as elevated a spirit as she was of propriety of feeling and goodness of disposition."

"She is naturally gifted in her qualifications of mind no less than person; hence these rumours about her parentage. It is a pity, however, that with a heart as buoyant in its native cheerfulness as her cheek is lovely,—with so much tender confidingness of disposition, and a spirit fresh as the mountain-dews her light feet brush away,—she should feel these happy qualities chilled somewhat by the ungenial demureness, and even austerity, of the dame, her mother."

"The good woman's demureness is easily ac-

counted for by the sanctimonious straight-lacing she has lately taken it into her head to adopt; and I dare say 'means' uncommonly 'well' towards a daughter whose beauty must render her an object of much notice, and, in her station of life, possibly subject her to some danger; except that she has too much good sense to have her head turned by compliment. The radiance of her pure, virtuous brow would confound the iniquity that should approach her, like Una's, in Spenser."

"Ay, and you may add, that the same good sense you speak of is not likely to permit her tastes to be readily won or pleased. She has had a good pattern of lofty virtue and mental superiority in the guardian of her earlier years, Fenton. His manners are plain and simple indeed, but his mind exalted and refined. . . . But where are we wandering? Surely we have taken the wrong path, and, bewildered in thinking of the charms, spiritual and personal, of the 'Beauty' of these wilds, have mistaken our way!"

"Indeed, so it should seem," replied Routhmore; "and if I recognise the spot aright whither we have strayed, it is to that desert haunt where you told me that old Mike . . . but, bless me, who are those two figures coming down the steep on the opposite side to this wilderness where we stand? See; they are descending by the rude, natural flight

of steps in the cliff-side. One of them, if I mistake not, should be old Mike himself, and the other--"

"The stranger whose appearance at church today excited our surmise as to who he could be, or whence he could come. . . . But let us stand aside; they see us . . . and observe, the stranger seems to hesitate whether he shall advance; but his guide, by his gestures, seems to beckon him onward."

While Golefield uttered these words, himself and his companion placed themselves behind a huge mass of broken rock, with the fragments of which the whole haunt around was strewed; the heaps being here and there tufted with rude brier and wild grass; being the same spot where we remember old Mike to have risen, phantom-like, to the wondering eyes of our hero sometime ago.

"It is the spot," resumed Golefield, "where the 'ancient mariner' makes his abode. The old man and I are friends; and it is not unfrequently I stroll alone to this weird habitation to bring him a trifling present, in the shape of some 'creature comfort,' and ask in return one of his strange tales for it."

"I never heard one of them yet, and have a singular curiosity to do so," said Routhmore.

"Oh, you shall hear. . . ."

But at this moment Golefield's words were in-

terrupted, as he started at the sudden appearance of Mike himself; when, after a few moments' pause, he resumed—

"What, Mike, is it you? We were just speaking of you; and lo! like a spirit, you have heard our 'invocation,' and have risen to gratify us with a sight of yourself. My friend here was anxious to hear that strange tale that won my fancy so, and which I have longed to listen to again when you would vouchsafe to recite it to me."

"Words—mere words!" ejaculated the old man;
to you at least," he added, significantly, as he dropped his voice. "Mere sunshine," he proceeded, "for your fancy's disport!—mere hues of fable!—and he that tells you the tale accounted but a crazy, fond chronicler of dreams. . . ."

[. . . " Nay, nay, Mike," interposed Golefield; while the old mariner proceeded to mutter to himself—]

"But there are some, I trow, who will know that these words are not mere sounds, nor the fears of Mike mere fable! . . . Well, gentlemen, what would ye in this abode of loneliness? . . . Ye have stumbled here on one who has little to offer you to yield it cheerfulness, when he tells you that, wilderness as it is, it is not so much so to him as is the world of heartlessness and regrets from which he seeks refuge in it. Those broken fragments

are not so forlorn as broken hearts and hopes!—
those wayward heaps not more obstacles in our
path than the contradictions that cross the track of
life! That little flowret smiling on the top of
yonder rock, what is it but the hope that must soon
wither, and which relieves—but in mockery, and for
a fleeting moment—the barrenness of destiny?...
What would you with one who can say little more
cheering than this?—whose poor thoughts are all he
possesses to people this wild withal; and such as
they are, little likely to win ye to tarry in its cheerless mazes with him!"

As the old man was speaking, both Golefield and Routhmore thought they heard a footstep pass rapidly from the spot in a contrary direction to that in which they were sitting; and it occurred to Golefield (who was better acquainted with the old man's subtle character than his comrade) that possibly he might have been seeking, in the words he had just uttered, to engage their attention in order to facilitate the withdrawal from the spot of the stranger in whose company they had lately seen him approach it. Such a conjecture was reasonable, since secrecy seemed to be the object of that person,-to judge, at least, by his early withdrawal from the church that morning, and his hesitation, not long ago, in proceeding down the cliff steps when he descried Golefield and his companion. Then, again, it occurred to Golefield that possibly this person might have been shewn by old Mike to his cell already mentioned in the rock-side, and where Golefield had ere now visited the weird mariner; accordingly, he resolved on proceeding to the cell, if Mike should offer no objection. Here he thought he should at length meet the venerable stranger that had excited his interest; and with this view he shaped his reply to Mike's words—

"Nay, Mike, these thoughts, which you say are all you possess to people this dreary waste withal, render it to me more cheering and of more interest than any scene of giddy stir or noisome din that life can offer. Nor deem that the words you utter are regarded by me as so much disport, and food for raillery at your expense. Not so; they make me love and marvel at the man who has endured so much, and felt so deeply. . . . And this my friend here feels as I do.—"

Routhmore smiled and bowed assent, as Golefield continued—

"So, what say you? shall we to the cell?" ...

"Well, well," said the old man; "be it as you will. You may think it a light task, haply, to me to recount the adventure or the peril my tales lead through." And here Mike paused, and looked searchingly at them, when he resumed, in a manner as earnest and wild as it was sudden—"The ship

that leaves her tranquil haven to encounter the buffets of wind and wave—the terror of the hurricane—launches not forth on a tempest more stormy than that which meets the spirit of the old mariner in recalling the memories you ask him to a vaken. Would they could sleep I—but woe worth the day that gave them birth! Their regret is not more for the past than the future fear of which they portray the forewarnings."

His two companions interchanged looks as they smiled at the old mariner's characteristic superstition. Meantime he strode before them to the chasm in the rock-side where his cell was situate, casting, however, a glance in the direction where the footsteps had been heard by his present comrades to recede. All was vacant and silent: no human form was traceable—no step but their own awakened the echoes of the solitary haunt.

JAMES HATFIELD

AND THE

BEAUTY OF BUTTERMERE.

VOL. II.

T. C. Savill, Printer, 107, St. Martin's Lane.

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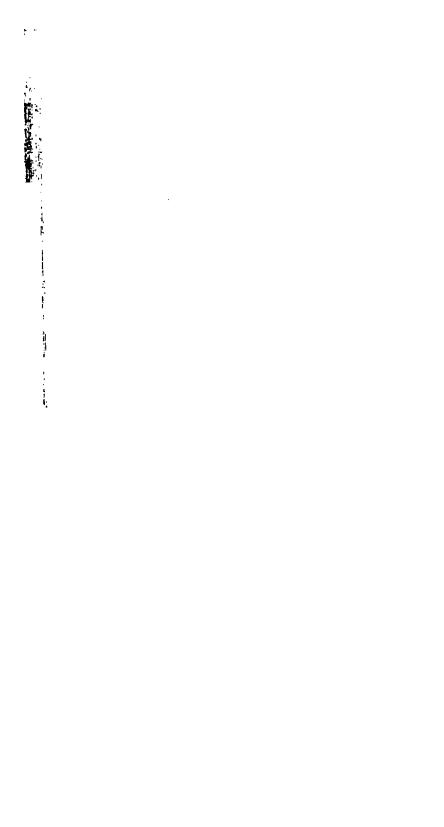
BY ROBERT CRUIKSHANK.

"I have great comfort from this fellow: methinks he hath no drowning mark upon him: his complexion is perfect gallows! Stand fast, good fate, to his hanging! Make the rope of his destiny our cable, for our own doth little advantage."—TEMPEST.

IN THREE VOLUMES.

VOL. II.

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1841.



ADVENTURES

JAMES HATFIELD.

CHAPTER I.

"The beams flash on. And make appear the melancholy wrecks Of cancelled cycles; anchors, beaks of ships, Quivers, helms, spears, and gorgon-headed targes, And the emblazonry round which death laughed."

SHELLEY.

IF Golefield had looked forward, on his admission to Mike's cell, to gratify his curiosity in seeing the venerable stranger there, he was at the same time constrained to own that, for the infirm frame and tottering limbs of age, the passage into the weird mariner's cell was little convenient, as we are about to witness. Accordingly, if he should not find that aged form where he expected, his surprise would not be very great; and his conclusion then would be, that the stranger had withdrawn just in time to avoid encountering himself and Routhmore, as indicated by the sound of the footsteps they had just heard receding from the spot.

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But to proceed on our way into the cell. After passing, then, the rude door which closed up its mouth, the visitor entered a narrow passage, which gradually became narrower, like an eel-weir or basket; or yet more humble illustration, the wire adit of a mouse-trap. Along this a dim gleam of light was thrown by an iron lamp which swung from the top. Inconvenient, however, as it was, the passage was not very long, and the visitors of Mike were in some degree recompensed for the constraint and obscurity of the entrance, by the superior scope, and rude, yet singular and interesting decoration of the cell itself. As we omitted the description of it on our former visit in company with Renmore, we will supply it here.

It was well lit up on the present occasion by the aid of two steel reflectors on each side the cell, with a small brass lamp in front of each; the reflectors multiplying the light to a degree that illumined every part of the cell, and shewed the minutest objects throughout its scope with perfect distinctness. There were all sorts of rude implements of warfare—spears, tomahawks, and scalping knives—suspended over the skins of beasts, round the sides of the cave. Many a rare and curious bird, too, whose shrill note once woke the wild echoes of woods in some uttermost part of the

earth, was preserved here. Shells of all hues and grotesque shapes stood side by side with huge dried calabashes and bamboo baskets. Old sea-chests and cable ends, and here and there a ponderous rusty anchor were seen; all of which conveyed to their singular possessor associations of many a perilous crisis of the deep, and on all of which he could descant with a vigour and earnestness which caught half its interest from the singular conviction displayed by the old man in all he related. that superior agencies were still in operation, and bore the greater part of the event, whatever the nature of it might be, that he retraced. It was this mystic tone and imaginative cast which gave all he said that complexion of awe which made him an object of fear and marvel to the rude vulgar, much more so than any marvels or dangers themselves which he related. Mike was no impostor; he might have been with much more reason pronounced, as the Scotch call it, "daft." He was thoroughly in earnest, and convinced of the truth of all his superstitious imaginings. You had only to hear him narrate a tale, and listen to the ordinary tone and style of his remarks, to understand that the old mariner was a thorough Fatalist. And as infatuated, perhaps, was he, and as conscientiously pertinacious in this respect, as any religious fanatic. If in this superstitious characteristic he was not altogether unlike his marine brothers, yet no common or vulgar "tar" was Mike. He was himself as "unique" as his adventures. No sea slang commonly made up his style of address; there was too much sense of suffering at the old man's heart to permit him to dally with trifling thoughts, or to speak in the careless, jovial style of his reckless fellow-mates.

In fact, few could hear him speak and not feel with him, though they might condemn him for his superstitious fancies. "Fancies," however, or not,-they were so earnestly felt by himself that they for the time carried away with them the person to whom they were imparted; none could mark his furrowed brow, shaded with its silvery, straggling locks, and rendered yet more impressive in the earnestness of its expression, without sympathizing with him. It seemed, as he told his strange narratives, that he related them as imparted by some unearthly communication; and the narrator was no less an object of awe in himself than to himself, for he appeared as much to hold in religious awe the circumstances he narrated, as a priest of Dodona might be supposed to do, in imparting the solemn warnings heard in mystic accents at the shrine where he bowed. Hence the ruder hearer caught the contagion of an unaccountable fear from that which the old man evinced himself, and

a picture of which effect we have given in a previous stage of our story.

The first object, however, that was looked for by our two adventurers-for those who trusted themselves in the precincts of the wizard mariner's abode were considered scarcely less so by the good folk of the vicinage-was the venerable stranger, who seemed, indeed, in all respects, a worthy compeer of old Mike, whether from his years or the mysterious doubts concerning him. looked for, however, in vain; and though, if Miss Howbiggen had been of the party, she might possibly have addressed her inquiries with a view to elucidating the mystery of his "whereabout," yet our two friends being of a less inquisitive (we were going to say " meddlesome") disposition, they kept their inquiries on this topic to themselves, and addressed them to examining the various objects of curiosity which the cell exhibited to attract their attention.

"Indeed, Mike, you must have been a far voyager over the ocean-deep," said Golefield, as he cast his eye on the savage gear of some bar barous island dwellers of the Pacific. "Why, what are these?" he added, examining some highly polished cups, curiously inlaid with pieces of that rare and beautiful shell whose varying colours blend the green, and blue, and gold together.

"Sculls, sculls," said the old man. "Ay, if you wish for a tale now, that would suit for one of your stage-play vagaries, and make the mob gape,—why, you may have it. Those sculls, that look so clean, and fair, and white—I have seen them brimming with the blood of my comrades,—that have I!"

"Nay; the tale would be of painful interest indeed, Mike," observed Golefield; "and acceptable to us, but that we look for another from you on the present occasion."

"But just let us know—what! did you lose all your comrades of the crew, under the hands of these savages or cannibals, as they seem to be?" asked Routhmore.

Ay, ay; myself was the last that was to be butchered, but Fate kept me for other and future trials, and so I was permitted, I suppose, to make my escape."

"And you should be thankful, Mike, to Heaven that you did," observed Routhmore.

"Thankful! and so I was. Thankful or unthankful, however, such was my destiny; and so, having seen all the poor fellows butchered before my face, I made an effort to preserve these few relics of them—one, two, three! there they are!" said the old man, counting the sculls, as he regarded them with a fixed and dreamy stare, as if

musing over the scenes of trial and horror which the sight of those relics recalled.

"But what is this?" said Routhmore, calling Golefield's attention to a splendid branch of white coral that stood as an ornament at the end of the cell, and seemed almost like a petrified tree, so beautiful and large were its ramifications.

" It is a charmed bough! a charmed bough!" ejaculated Mike, with a start, as he turned abruptly away from gazing at the sculls, and pursuing the dreams attached to them. "The winds whistled, and the deep raved for our lives in vain, while that branch was on deck! Ha, ha! . . . to see some of the sailors fling themselves on their knees and worship it, would have made even you laugh; for youand all the world almost, as long as they are out of peril," (he added, with a half sneer,) " can afford to laugh at these strange events, and the excited feelings attached to them! You mock the tale that speaks of them with awe and marvel; but let me tell you, there are spirits invisible to you or me, or any of us, that may hover round a hulk, and sway events wondrously enough to excuse a poor mariner for a little superstition, as you would call it. . . . Methinks you would look pale to see what I have seen! . . . Well, well! not the wisest of us know how far our thoughts and actions, the

events of our lives, the movements of our moral, or even bodily pilgrimage, are influenced."

"Indeed, Mike, I believe firmly with you that there are unseen and superior agencies that may often act (as you more than surmise) in influencing our thoughts and actions."

"Superior agencies!" ejaculated Routhmore; "say at once, an all-swaying Providence."

"You are right—you are right!" said Golefield, in a lowered tone to his friend; "but it would be perhaps to lose our expected tale were we to dispute Mike's 'Code of Fatalism;'" and then raising his voice and addressing the old man, he continued, "but we are both of us, my friend, Mr. Routhmore and myself, anxious that you would launch us, Mike, on that sea of wonders where you were saved through a child, and which we long to navigate with you."

"Why that tale?" said the old man, impatiently.

"See you that sea-chest yonder?—look at the handle of it."

"It has something attached to it like the skeleton of a hand!" said Golefield.

"Ay! it was an honest hand as ever was shaken in confidence by a friend, while the life-blood throbbed in the veins. I have grasped it many a time. Well; will a story of that hand suit you?— how it came there? why I loved the being of whose clay-frame it once formed a part? eh? will that suit?" asked the old mariner, eagerly.

"It were a tale strange enough," said Routhmore, "to answer for a host of others; but I have a singular curiosity, Mike, to hear the one my friend here refers to."

"Yes, yes!" added Golefield; "that one Mike;—come, good Mike."

"Why that tale?" ejaculated the old man, with renewed impatience, as he continued muttering to himself; "it was but the other day I told it to the crowd; and it becomes more painful to me as its destinies approach nearer completion." And then raising his voice, he continued, "Well; I see you demand it of me."

With these words, he rose hastily up, and adjusting one or two rude seats by a little low table in the cell, he flung a loose covering over them of seal-skins, and motioned his two distinguished auditors to take, each of them, a seat, while he himself remained standing, as a posture more agreeable to that restlessness which the excitement of the story he was about to relate occasioned. With a hurried step and anxious look he strode once or twice up and down the cell in silence, when he suddenly stopped short in front of them, and launched, as it were, with an effort, into the

outset of his narrative,—as though the task were one of little satisfaction to him, and rather encountered than approached.

The reader being already acquainted with the narration, we shall take this opportunity of explaining a circumstance in connexion with it, which is yet due from us, and for offering which explanation the proper opportunity is now afforded. a word, it relates to our hero's visit to old Mike after his parley with Simmonds, or rather Quandish. With feelings, then, of exultation and good-humoured raillery did Renmore relate how he had managed to avert the doom that menaced him. But exhibit what confidence he would, the old mariner little participated in his good spirits, and shook his head incredulously as he listened. "But for a time! but for a time!" muttered the sceptical Mike. "I have known a cloud hang overhead at sea a long time, -nay, seem to pass away for a while,-but burst in tempest and terror at last !" and then raising his voice, he continued, "Would that old Mike could smile with you at his 'superstitions,' as you are pleased to call them. How far they may be so or not will be proved, perhaps, too soon!" and here he muttered out again some words, which were those of an old Cumberland ballad, to the following effect, as far as they were distinguishable by Renmore's ear"I nothing boast to be much versed In cabalistic lore, But only hint what shall betide By what has been before."

Such, then, was the result of our hero's nightvisit to Mike's cell; and if the old man witnessed his confidence with scepticism, he yet witnessed it with compassion also. But happy, indeed, was the greeting which took place between Gertrude and our hero the next morning. Nor was he more joyed in being able to inform her that there was no necessity for his being called away from the spot (as we remember he had suggested to her as an excuse) than she was to hear the welcome intelligence of his stay.

But to return now to the cell, as the ancient mariner had now brought his narrative to a conclusion. His hearers could not forbear an inquiry or two concerning the fates of the infant adventurer it memorialized.

"So you took him home to his parents, whom you say he subsequently left?" asked Golefield. "And what have been his fortunes since that period? Where has been his home? Who has supplied the place of a parent to him?"

"The wide world has been his home," replied Mike, solemnly; "and Destiny his parent and fosterer." "Sublimely said, Mike," answered Golefield; "but I should like to hear explained a little more particularly what the course of his track through life has been. A wayward one, I doubt not—and your silence would augur fraught with pain, with fear, with peril."

"Perhaps some fatal doom has already overtaken it?" continued Routhmore, supplying the conclusion which he thought Mike's countenance seemed to augur; and he was about to renew the suggestion when the old man involuntarily started at this inquiry, which seemed to try his inmost soul. As if to evade any further questioning, he proceeded hastily to the entrance of the cave, and looking upon the dim waste without, he cried to his visitors, "The lengthened shadows of the crag tell me the westering sun is fast sinking over the slope yonder. You will be late away for Keswick, gentlemen,—you will be late away; and Mike will (so please you) give you a lift in his shallop over the meer."

So saying, the ancient mariner, apparently determined to turn a deaf ear to any further inquiry, strode forward in advance of them, leaving them no alternative but to follow. This they were not sorry to do, when Routhmore recalled to his companion's mind their engagement to dine with the Howbiggens. "We shall indeed be late," he added; "and as for Mike, it is in vain to waste time in provoking him with 'further question,' for he appears obdurate in his refusal to communicate anything further;—so let us follow."

"In truth, he has wound our curiosity up to a high pitch: and whether it be his love of the mysterious or not, I have little doubt he knows, or pretends to know, the verification of all that his story is a forewarning of. It is a singular tale, and might well occupy the fancy of a poet."

So saying, Golefield followed his friend out of the cell, when they espied the old man standing at the base of the rude natural staircase along the cliff-side already mentioned. He stood looking inquiringly for their approach, as if impatient of their delay. On seeing they were advancing, he proceeded up the cliff, on the top of which all three were soon making their way towards the meer, which was glistening in the crimson glow of sunset, at some distance below the heights.

"It will be convenient for us—" observed Routhmore, by way of breaking the silence into which he observed his companion Golefield had fallen, "this transit across the lake in Mike's shallop. We will ask him to land us at the nearest point to Howbiggen's house. It is not far, then, for us to proceed."

But Golefield was rapt too entirely in the thoughts that occupied him to be sensible of his friend's observation.

"Ay, I suppose" (thought Routhmore to himself) "he is already putting Mike's tale into a poetical dress. Singular as it is in itself, it will win fresh charms when arranged in the colours of such a fancy."

And now they had arrived at the meer-bank, and Mike proceeded to unchain the little shallop which he had that morning moored in the cove, as already described.

"You are for Keswick, gentlemen, this evening?" asked the old man.

"Yes," answered Routhmore, for himself and his companion; "but we first of all are going to Mr. Howbiggen's, on the opposite side of the meer; so, have the goodness to land us near that point; the landing point nearer the Keswick road is further south than Mr. Howbiggen's, unless I mistake."

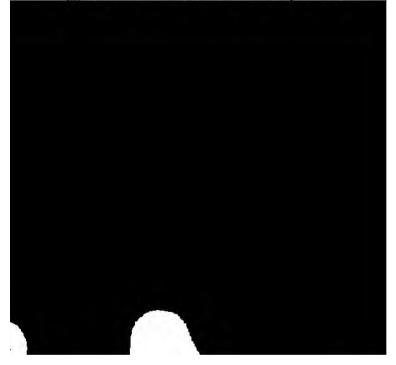
The old man nodded his head in token of assent, and the whole trio being now seated in the shallop, it flew along beneath the impulse of Mike's oars, as if they had been wings on which it skimmed the wave. Like the wings, too, (the golden glittering wings of some bird of fairy-land,) did those oars appear as they glittered in that rich yellow lustre in which

the pure flood was tinted. Nor was it long before the shadows of the foliage that bordered the opposite shore cast a grateful coolness over the burning waters; and those winged oars now relaxing their speed, drooped them like a bird's pinion when the spot of its roost is found.

CHAPTER II.

"He slyly laid hands on the important document, and secreted it."—Scott.

To return now to the festive party at Mr. Howbiggen's. We remember that the fairer portion of



exasperating those gouty symptoms to which this gentleman's constitution was liable. Accordingly, on his proceeding to help himself to the dangerous beverage, an interdict was laid upon his so doing by the Doctor.

"What? actually helping yourself to claret? and in my presence, too?" exclaimed the merry disciple of Æsculapius, with a look of ludicrous horror, as his eye glanced from the claret to his host's visage, which was screwed up in a look half-apprehensive as to what he was doing, and half-irritable at the interdict imposed on him.

"Why, I thought you of all your medical brethren," muttered out Mr. Howbiggen, "picqued yourself on letting people have just what chiefly gratified their palates—eh? umph! How is this? I thought one of the maxims of your medical code was, that 'whatever we like we should indulge in, because our liking it is a sign it agrees with us!"

"'Reason! reason!' as Falstaff says," replied Esdaile. "I do not flinch one iota from the principle you have just uttered; but let me ask, who ever heard of claret and the gout agreeing? Every rule, however good as a general principle, has, under certain circumstances, its modifications—its exceptions."

"Exceptions! he, he!" giggled out Howbiggen, dissatisfiedly, while he still hesitated to convey the claret to his lips. "Oh! pray drink it by all means," continued Esdaile, in a tone of irony. "I recommend you, and you will find out for once who is right and who is wrong. Claret, indeed! why," he continued, turning to Renmore and Lawton, "I should have our excellent host turned into a very vinegar cruet were he to drink anything so acid as claret."

A smile here played on the faces of the persons appealed to, in acknowledgment of this sally in illustration of Mr. Howbiggen's native "acidity" of disposition; while the cynic now retorted, as he (with no very good grace) put aside the claret and helped himself to the less noxious juice of the grape afforded in sherry.

"Pah!" he said; "the acid of the claret can do me not half so much harm as your plaguing me, as you often do, with your pretended philosophical smattering about 'mind and body! Your 'reciprocity' rubbish,—by which he professes," added Howbiggen, turning to Renmore and Lawton, "that he can cure the mind by curing the body; which, no doubt, he fancies he is doing now, by telling me not to touch claret!—pah! pooh! let him give me back my happier hopes,—my glad feelings,—my pride of mind,—my just expectations,—my . . . all that rendered life worth living for,—the mind happy, the heart healthful,—then he

would see me well, indeed !--pooh, pooh !--It can't be,--it can't be."

"Here," said Esdaile, also addressing our hero and Lawton, "is the endless topic of contention between Mr. Howbiggen and myself. We both declare that we each of us begin at the wrong end in treating my friend's disordered habit. I, at any rate, proceed reasonably, that is, in doing all I can for the mortal clay-tenement, and as far as the soundness of this can be achieved, also strengthening and exhilarating the mind, as a consequence on the health of the body. He, on the contrary, asks for impossibilities,—he asks me for the feelings and hopes of youth! he might as well ask to be seventeen again. Now, which do you decide of the two ought to bow to the other?"

Mr. Lawton looked most oracularly profound, as if cogitating on some supreme plan that would solve the difficulty at once; but while this Œdipus was thus cogitating and sipping claret, our hero replied in a style of conciliation, politic no less than polite, since both the adversaries were equally pleased by it—" Why really, in your hands, Dr. Esdaile, I have little doubt that Mr. Howbiggen has everything done for him that the nature of his case will admit of—"

[&]quot; Precisely!" interposed Esdaile.

[&]quot;Ay, ay !" grumbled Howbiggen, "as far as

the nature of the case will admit perhaps; but how far, pray, is that?—ugh !"]

——"But, I would certainly address myself also," continued their polite arbitrator, "to diverting the mind (as indeed is the case in the present instance) by such attractions as novelty, scenes of splendour, beauty, and excitement convey. The awaking new trains of thought, new impulses of feeling, new associations,—these are the best spiritual medicines we can prescribe. Now, all this appears to be done, in Mr. Howbiggen's having repaired to this realm of 'tor-heights' and 'tarns,' where all is beautiful as it is new."

"Vastly well! vastly well said!" observed Mr. Lawton. "Cleverly put! Colonel Renmore has shewn, satisfactorily enough, that you have both pursued a course good in its way, and requisite withal, though I should be inclined to add that a little more active occupation would be of service. I would recommend some mental exercise beyond that even of the pleasurable excitement derived from all the sources that Colonel Renmore mentions so justly,—ahem! I would wean the mind by a challenge a little more coercive than the mere luxuriation (if I may use the word) of pleasurable association. I should—ahem!—suggest a little scientific or experimental——"

. . . "Oh, good heavens! you would find me

'an impatient,' I take it, instead of a 'patient,' at that rate!" hastily interposed Howbiggen, as he added, with his usual growl, "I see plainly what you are coming to,—you are proceeding to place me on your own hobby of 'experimentalizing.' No, no; it is enough to be the victim of Esdaile's quackery, without yours, my worthy friend!"

"Quackery, my dear Sir?" replied Mr. Lawton, with a native dignity that shewed he was superior to the effect of all such taunts. "What Dr. Esdaile's nostrums may be, (ha, ha!) I really cannot say!"—and here he looked round at our hero with a consciousness that he was saying "a good thing," as he laughed at his own acumen,—"but I am proud, I must say, of the 'quackery' by which I have managed (I flatter myself) to render a district, at one time a mere wilderness, productive of"

... "Potatoes, instead of peat, which was much more in character with it!" interposed Esdaile, adopting the pompous style of delivery of the Blacktarn philosopher. "Mighty triumph of enterprise and capital to be sure! but if my worthy patient here is to divert his attention and achieve alacrity of spirits by improving away all the beauties of the place, like yourself, I would rather see him spleen-eaten as he is!"

" Ugh !-much obliged ! much obliged !" said

Howbiggen. "Areades ambo!" he growled to Renmore, just loud enough to be heard. "Blockheads both!"

Esdaile's raillery, meantime, being called away from his host to the Blacktarn oracle, the reader will be amused by having a sample of this genius's experiments. Dr. Esdaile accordingly proceeded, as a smile played on his lip indicative of the spirit of banter in which he spoke.

- "By-the-bye, Mr. Lawton, how did the 'new land-draining process answer?"
- "Oh, the under-ground meadow-draining affair, you mean!—ah!—yes...why, unfortunately, there was a slight oversight——"
- ... "Oversight! what, under your superintendence?—bless me!" exclaimed the Doctor, in a feigned ecstasy of ludicrous wonder.
- "Why, yes; the most shrewd and sagacious may be deceived sometimes. And so it happened in the present instance; for, unfortunately, in leading our cut, or drain, through the farm-yard, we had not secured the bed of it sufficiently,—consequently (ahem!) there was what is called a 'settlement,' (a settlement, that is, of the water,)—so the foundation (ahem!) gave way, the brick-work fell in"
- . . . "And the water, fell out, eh? and set all the chickens, hens, and turkeys, cackling and floating in the flood—was that it?" asked the Doctor,

giving way at length to the burst of cachinnation which followed on the "experimentalist's" melancholy reply in the affirmative.

Thus unadvised, in fact, was too often the character of Mr. Lawton's experiments. It was fortunate, however, for his self-love and confidence, that he always (as has been already surmised) had an excuse ready; and the "wrong season," or "unforeseen accident," or some other such saving clause to the preamble of blunder, came in for his succour. In fact, Mr. Lawton, though a very worthy man, was, as at present regarded, but a specimen of that class that innovate for innovation's sake, without any matured or expedient plan; and whose self-love never permits them to imagine they can have been wrong, or to reap any salutary warning from past failure. A very numerous class, by-the-bye, in the present age of projectors.

"And how did the pheasants thrive in the new preserve?" inquired Esdaile, again anticipating an answer about as decisive of his friend's "sagacity," as the former one.

"Why, unfortunately, it was not discovered till too late that there were fox-earths in the very same covers, and——"

---- "They made a dinner of the young pheasants the very first day they were put into the cover, eh?—was that it?" "Why, upon my word, I fear," said the philosopher, hesitating, "I must confess that . . . it did so happen; but then, who could possibly foresee such a contingency?" he added, appealing to his host, whose most charitable reply was, however, only a barbarous kind of satiric giggle or snort; while Renmore observed, with a more compassionate feeling and a gentler forbearance—

"Why, failure is the chance we run in all enterprise; and laudable indeed are those, and public-spirited too, who, nothing daunted by the apprehensions of possible failure, enter upon a course of experiment by which it often happens that their country—the objects of science—the cause of civilization—and mankind, are benefited."

"True, true!—admirably said! It requires, let me tell you, Doctor, no little spirit to enter on the field of improvement!" exclaimed the Blacktarn philosopher, rallying at this "word of comfort," and emboldened by which, he now in turn attacked the merry banterer Esdaile; his subject of boasting, however, being more interesting as regards what it led to, than in itself.

shall not say that I am equally unfortunate in everything; for the newly constructed lock—of which I shewed you the model—has entirely answered all expectations. No thief in England can

pick it... My own invention,—every ward in it, Colonel Renmore !—a curiosity in its way. I challenge a whole army of locksmiths to make such an one, without having the secret previously from me!"

"Indeed! it must be a most surprising and also valuable invention," observed Renmore.

"Invaluable say!" continued the sage inventor; "I defy even that prince of forgers, Hatfield himself, to make a 'fac-simile' of it, even should I shew it him! And he can forge almost anything, they say. . . . Clever fellow that, but a terrible rascal no doubt."

"He must indeed be a clever fellow," replied Renmore, smiling, "if it is true that he has performed such feats of dexterity as is reported."

"Reported! my good Colonel; why every one says he is the cleverest rogue, ay, as well as the most polite one, ever witnessed in the annals of swindling! He is a man that, if he knew you, would not let you escape without forging your handwriting sooner or later, and drawing on you for 500%, or some such trifle! Oh, a dreadfully clever fellow!—though I defy him to forge my handwriting for all that!"

"Well, that is singular!" observed Renmore, smiling, while Dr. Esdaile cried—

"No! I defy any one, even Hatfield himself,

to forge our excellent friend Mr. Lawton's hand. Pray," he continued to the Squire of Blacktarn, who good-humouredly heard the following stricture on his hand of writ; "pray, take out a card, if you happen to have one about you, and produce it pro bono publico. And as Mr. Lawton accordingly acceded to this request, the little Doctor proceeded, holding up the card—"There is a hieroglyphic! A spider's legs dipped in an ink-stand, and crawling over a sheet of paper would form marks (you can't say letters) as legible!"

The "hieroglyphic" card extracted a smile from even old Howbiggen, who said, gruffly—"If Hatfield could forge that writing, he could forge the old Zend tablets of the Persian Magi!"

"Ay; make the Rosetta Stone and the Irish Bobiloth alphabet plain reading to a running man!" added Esdaile.

"I think," observed Mr. Lawton, with an air of pompous triumph, as if there was something to be very proud of in his atrocious "hand of writ," "he would find it rather a difficult experiment."

"An awkward one, certainly," said Dr. Esdaile.

"Indeed," observed Renmore, appearing to take but a cursory glance at the "hieroglyphic" in question, but at the same time observing it acutely and narrowly—"Indeed, I should think it somewhat embarrassing to copy it; still, I would hardly refuse laying a wager that this famous Hatfield you speak of would forge it."

"Done for a hundred!" cried Lawton. "I should not mind witnessing the experiment; but how are we to prove the circumstance?"

"Oh, it is impossible," said Renmore, smiling.

"However, an opportunity may occur."

"Ay, ay; you mean that he is likely to be apprehended sooner or later, and then we may chance to obtain a sample of his skill, on an application being made to him for that purpose, I doubt not; and thus the wager may be eventually decided."

"I dare say, in some such way," . . . Renmore was proceeding to reply, when his words were interrupted by the entrance here of the returned truants, Messrs. Golefield and Routhmore, in the former of which he recognised the "geological speculator" he had heretofore met, as described in an earlier stage of our story. Nor did he forget the psychological vagary, or poem, Golefield had promised to shew him, illustrative of those geological fancies which on that occasion the "dreamy philosopher" propounded; but an opportunity was not at the present moment afforded him of speaking about the "said psychology," so he and the bard could merely bow to each other in the greeting of recognition. Salutations also showered on the two "genii" from all quarters.

"Why, hail! all hail! the 'genii of the lake!"
exclaimed the merry Doctor, as he rose and assisted
in placing a chair for the distinguished persons that
had now joined the circle.

"Why, gentlemen, you are late," said their host; "and hungry you must be too."

While he spoke, he rang the bell, and ordered a second edition of dinner for his two belated guests, which was speedily placed before them, while the conversation continued; though, before we resume it, we ought to notice that, in the momentary confusion occasioned by the general rise from the table and placing chairs for the returned guests, Mr. Lawton let the card, which had a moment before been the leading topic of interest, drop from his hand on the chair of his next neighbour, who was our hero. For reasons best known to himself, Renmore let the doily which was in his hand fall upon it, and quietly transferred it, unperceived, to his waistcoat pocket. Perhaps, on account of its curiosity, he wished to secure this specimen of Mr. Lawton's autograph; for the note of invitation to Blacktarn, which we have heretofore witnessed him as having received, was in Miss Lawton's handwriting, so that he now saw her father's for the first time.

Having thus recorded this perhaps not unimportant piece of "by-play" in the drama, we will proceed with the leading dialogue in it, from which we were thus momentarily constrained to step aside.

"We began to have our qualms concerning you—your hostess and I," resumed Howbiggen. "We fancied some dire accident must have befallen you, eh?" continued Howbiggen. "No bones broken, I hope?—all safe and sound? No awkward fall down a cliff-side, while the wits were wandering in another direction, umph?—no 'kite-flying' of this kind, eh?"

These characteristic interrogatories on the part of their host elicited a smile from the persons to whom they were addressed, as Routhmore replied—

- "Accidents! say you. Ay, accidents, and moving accidents of flood and field,' too, have befallen us!"
- "What? an encounter with witches on the heath? glamours, warlocks—for the country supplies them?" observed Esdaile; "for since you have had no physical accident, I suppose some moral accident of this kind must have befallen you."
- "Why, really something of the kind has befallen us," observed Golefield. "We have been, in a word, held spell-bound under the wand of an enchanter; and hence our delay."
- "An enchanter !" asked Lawton; "who can be be?"
 - "Ay, pray say !" interposed the facetious Doc-

tor; "for I perceive Mr. Lawton is a little jealous of some suspected rival, seeing he is so great a conjuror himself!"

And here a chorus of cachinnation followed up the sally of the Doctor, while Golefield answered—

"Nay, conjuror as our friend Mr. Lawton may be, yet I can't help thinking we have fallen in with one to whom he must yield. In a word, after seeing Mr. Fenton for some little distance on his way to Lorton, we rambled on, 'losing ourselves' in lovely lanes, that not less also 'lost themselves' in woods and wilds, whither they led, till at last we found ourselves on that strange bed of stone beneath the cliffs to the north."

"Ay, where I think I had the pleasure of first meeting you, some little time ago?" observed Renmore.

"Indeed, so it was," replied Golefield, as he proceeded . . . "Well, this was the haunt which was the 'whereabout' of our magician, on whom we soon stumbled; and that magician or wizard was the 'ancient mariner'—Mike."

The colour transitorily passed from Renmore's cheek as the name was mentioned. Certain recollections of the not over-agreeable destinies the strange superstitious old man declared hung over his head, might have occasioned this momentary uneasiness; however, it passed off, while, with an

air of well-dissembled surprise, and feigned inquiry, he asked—

"I have understood the person you mention is a singular character, and imbued with a thorough conviction of the infallibility of his doctrines of Fatalism. And pray, what was the 'rite,' might I ask, by which he held you spell-bound thus long in the magic ring which he described around you?"

"Oh, a singular story, which it would really interest you to hear," replied Golefield, "about a child that (he will have it) bore a 'charmed life'"—

"What, that story?" hastily observed Renmore, as he involuntarily started.

"Yes; perhaps you have heard it?"

"No, no!—at least, not the one you speak of; but one of a similar character."

"Well!" interposed Lawton; "and what of the child?—let us hear. I like mightily these odd tales; and don't know whether I shall not send for the old wizard (as they call him) to Blacktarn, to see how far he eclipses me,—eh, Dr. Esdaile?—conjuror though you pronounce me!"

So saying, the good-humoured squire looked at his bantering friend and smiled; while Golefield replied—

"Oh! it is a long story, I can assure you; and you had far better apply to the old mariner himself to recite it; for none but himself can do it justice. You ought, indeed, to hear him, Colonel Renmore. He is a perfect character, and one of the 'curiosities' of this spot. As for the story about the child," he continued, turning to Lawton, "he takes it through a 'sea' (literally) of adventure; in all which peril it is saved for some future doom, that the narrator hints is in fearful waiting for it, according to the decree of its destinies. What remark think you I made, when I asked him what had become of this 'charmed babe?"...

"Nay; we are not such conjurors as to be able to tell," replied Esdaile.

"Why, I said, now, if Hatfield had been this 'imp of destiny'—this charmed infant,—why then, I could have placed a greater degree of reliance on the authenticity of so singular and strange a narrative. What say you, Colonel Renmore?"

"Yes; true, true!—assuredly! And what reply did he make?"

"Why, I declare he almost made me believe that Hatfield was the being his tale had in contemplation, for he answered only by evasions, and at length was perfectly silent!"

"Indeed! well, that is singular," observed Renmore, disguising his feelings, whatever they might have been, by the smile which, however well he was able generally to assume, for some reason or other he found it difficult to call up at the present moment. "I must hear him, indeed," he exclaimed. "A singular circumstance."

But he was relieved here of any secret embarrassment of which he might be conscious, by the motion of their host to adjourn to the drawingroom "and join the ladies."

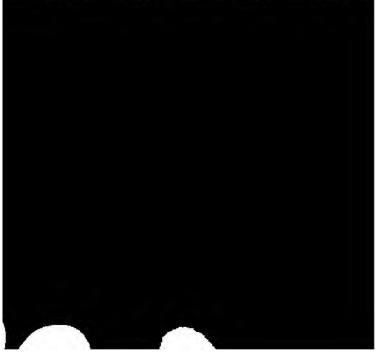
"Yes; and the music, too, which I hear, challenges us to meet its summons," added Esdaile, with true epicurean zest.

Accordingly, everybody rose from his seat, happy to accede to Mr. Howbiggen's proposal, and proceeded at once towards the drawing-room.

- "Charmingly the melodist plays," observed Renmore to Mr. Lawton, "whoever she is!"
- "Ah! that is my daughter,—that is Laura, I fancy."
- "Nay, then," replied Renmore, in his accustomed style of gallantry, "let us lose no time in approaching the sphere of so much harmony. Here is indeed an enchantress it is agreeable to approach, and whose spells I would gladly meet in preference to those of fifty such magicians as old Mike, of whom we were just now talking."
- "On my word, Colonel, you are too good. You speak too kindly of my poor girl," exclaimed the honest lord of Blacktarn, in innocent exultation at the homage offered his daughter's acquirements; while Golefield, who overheard this remark

of our hero's gallantry, observed to him—" Ay, Colonel, but who knows?—these harmonious spells we are about to feel the effect of, may, after all, be more dangerous and difficult to escape from than the more solemn ones of even old Mike."

Renmore smiled in acquiescence; while he thought to himself—" Are they so?" as he asked the question of his heart. What its reply might be we think we could interpret, when we remember the affections that swayed it in another quarter. But really the human heart is such a riddle that we must "bide" awhile before we can fully pronounce on the subject. Suffice it, at present, to say, that the harmonious challenge that had already sum-



CHAPTER III.

"Till the dilating soul, enrapt, transfus'd,
Into the mighty vision passing—there,
As in her natural form, swell'd vast to heav'n!"

COLERIDGE

The hissings of a portentous urn, about the size of a cenotaph, (the "fashion of the day,") blent their murmurs with the harmonies of Laura Lawton's performance on the piano-forte. Before the urn was seated, in all due dignity, the fair hostess, Miss Howbiggen, doing the honours of the evening tea-table, in a style that would have drawn forth an episode from the author of the "Task" and the "Sofa," whose bland and domestic muse first immortalized "the cups that cheer, but not inebriate."

"So you have found your way back to us at last, gentlemen?" said Miss Howbiggen, as Golefield and Routhmore approached to apologize to their hostess for their unusual lateness. While they were seated near her, amusing her with their ad-

ventures, and gratifying her very "attic" propensity for hearing anything in the shape of "intelligence,"—(or, as Mr. Howbiggen less ceremoniously termed it, "gossip,")—our hero advanced to the pianoforte, accompanied by Mr. Lawton.

Dr. Esdaile, meantime, and his host took up the cudgels of argument again between each other, as was usual when they met, with little chance of either of them convincing the other; the Doctor, however, occasionally breaking off from the defence of his "system," or code de santé, to look round towards the piano and ejaculate his praises of Miss Lawton's performance. When we say Miss Lawton's performance, we ought to add that it was now aided by our hero, who accompanied her with his voice, and not only "made himself useful" in turning over the leaves of her music-book, but yet more, after first of all accompanying her in a "solo" piece, he sang a duet with her.

The portentous approbation of Mr. Lawton greeted the first performance with a "bravo," and the second with a "bravo bravissimo;" and not a little pleased was the worthy Blacktarn squire to find that his daughter's accomplishments had at length found some one who so eminently aided in their due exhibition. And really he might well congratulate himself on this circumstance, for (if we except the instance of Esdaile and the "Genii") anything

like harmony was lost on the Howbiggen party; for Miss Howbiggen did "not play," and Mr. Howbiggen had "no ear whatever" for music. Nay, he was so atrociously disqualified in his tastes, and so insensible to the charm of music, that, like Doctor Johnson, he never heard a piece of "difficult" execution, without from his soul wishing it were "impossible," as the happiest climax to its perplexity.

It may be imagined that the acquaintance which had improved so well during the conversation between our hero and the heiress of Blacktarn during dinner, was not a little strengthened by this link of harmony by which they were now held together, like two beads strung on one thread. Mr. Lawton, who "doted" on his daughter, (to use Miss Howbiggen's expression,) and was no less proud also of her acquirements, was tacitly in raptures at the thought that his daughter's talent would no longer be buried and lost for want of the presence of any one capable of appreciating it, and drawing it out. For since Blacktarn was a very out-of-the-way place, and in consequence of floods from the hills, at times also inaccessible, the society of the Lawtons, together with the opportunities for it, was very limited. It is true that the " Genii of the Lake" occasionally wandered up to see them, but their visits were like those of angels, "few and far between;" and consequently, though they had both taste and feeling to appreciate any acquirements the fair "heiress" might display, yet the occasions when she was called on to exhibit them were necessarily very scarce and limited. Mr. Lawton, therefore, with a "providence" on which he piqued himself, was determined, now he had caught this "rara avis" of a Colonel,-all accomplished, polished, and amiable as he was,-to make the most of him, and invite him to Blacktarn for a short period. Possibly the thought might come across him, that an acquaintance begun so agreeably-matured so happily-might end in a yet more "interesting" bond than that of mere acquaint-The Colonel was of noble family, of fair possessions (no doubt) in the county of Caithness,-(for so Mr. Lawton had learned of Miss Howbiggen,)-who knows, then, thought he, but that the quarters of the "Hon. Colonel Renmore, M.P., of Clan-renmore, county Caithness," might eventually be fixed in the domain' that recognised the fair heiress of Blacktarn as its mistress? . . . Congenial tastes, fortune on both sides, good connexion, et cetera et cetera!

All these considerations, we say, thronged in rapid succession on the mind of the "provident" father; and the evening having now been brought thus harmoniously to its termination, and our hero and his fair musical partner having retired from the piano, the former was about now to take his leave.

"You must positively lose no time, Colonel Renmore, in giving us the pleasure of your company for a few days at Blacktarn," said Mr. Lawton, extending his hand to our hero, in the ceremony of leave-taking. "I have some important alterations going on, upon which I should particularly like to have the opinion of a man of taste like yourself. Laura and myself will be delighted to do the honours of Blacktarn, whenever you can make it convenient to come and see us."

Laura acquiesced with a laudable obedience to her sire's hospitable wishes, as a blush (not unperceived by Miss Howbiggen) rose transiently in her cheek. Nor did our hero refuse them the pleasurable anticipation of his company, as he expressed "that he should feel much flattered, indeed, in paying his respects." Accordingly, it was understood that he was to pay Blacktarn a visit in a day or two. This invitation was not, however, the only testimony of homage offered to his agreeable qualifications and society, for the little Doctor started up and said—

"Ay; and mind, Colonel, before you leave this region of wonders, that I have not yet introduced you to the whole conclave of my Genii of the Lake.' We agreed, I think, on our first little fishing excursion together, to take another in the direction of Windermere, where I must introduce you to the poet of Nature herself, my friend Woodsland."

"Nay; and you must come over to Keswick and see us, too," added Golefield and Routhmore, almost at the same time; while Miss Howbiggen, not willing to be behind-hand, and anxious to have the "distinguished stranger" under her roof no less than her "fair rival," (as we had almost said,) the heiress of Blacktarn, exclaimed—

"And I wish, Colonel Renmore, whilst you are at Buttermere, you would condescend to make our house your home."

"How am I to answer to so much kindness showered on me on all sides at once?" replied our hero, smiling; "you overwhelm me, I may truly say, with so much goodness."

"Ay, to be sure," interposed the merry little Doctor; "one at a time—one at a time! we press too thickly on Colonel Renmore. Well, then, it is understood between us, Colonel, we are to pay a visit to Woodsland together?"

"I shall be delighted," was the reply.

"And you will not forget us?" asked Golefield, speaking for himself and his brother genius of Keswick. " Most happy, if it is in my power-"

"And, Colonel Renmore, am I to have the pleasu"

him, made his retreat before Miss Howbiggen had repeated her invitation; while her amiable brother observed, in his peculiar style—

"Ugh! no doubt he is glad to get away; I'm sure I should have been so, under such a volley of civilities!"

"You, Mr. Howbiggen," observed his more sociable sister; "perhaps you might; but, fortunately, we all do not make precisely the same estimate as yourself of feelings both sociable and praiseworthy."

"True, true," observed Dr. Esdaile; "but," (lowering his voice, he added,) "this is only Mr. Howbiggen's 'way' of speaking; he does not mean anything ill-natured or dissocial."

So saying, the Doctor followed the example of our hero, and took his leave, accompanied by Golefield and Routhmore, on their way back, all three of them, to Keswick. Scarcely had they taken their leave, than the servant announced that Mr. Lawton's carriage was at the door; and this worthy, together with his daughter, having accordingly obeyed the summons to depart, their host and hostess were now left to themselves.

Miss Howbiggen's impatience to express her sentiments of her distinguished guest as fully as she should wish, gave itself immediate vent in an enumeration of all those qualifications which so deservedly had won her admiration, together with that, indeed, of all who had been of the late party. "The Colonel's elegance !- the Colonel's eloquence !- the Colonel's handsome countenance !the Colonel's distinguished appearance !- the Colonel's family! - the Colonel's information! - the Colonel's voice !- his talent for music !- his delightful conversation!-his property, too, in Caithness!" all were reiterated in the apparently interminable catalogue which Miss Howbiggen drew up of his many and varied endowments, both of mind, person, and fortune.

"Oh Lord! oh Lord! have you not yet finished dinning that fellow's name in my ears?" exclaimed her less enraptured brother, losing all patience at the enumeration of such endless virtues. "This fellow has quite turned your head! and that babyish girl's too—that Laura Lawton's,—I've no doubt, with his singing and prating! Oh, good heavens! I'm sick of the whole set of them,—that solemn blockhead, Lawton, her father, and that bore of a Doctor, with his two 'romance-mongers,' who, after all, are the best of the set!—ugh—tired out of my life!"

So saying, Mr. Howbiggen seized a candlestick, and hobbled off to bed as fast as he could, nothing heedful as to the bland and wholesome objurgation which it fell to the lot of Miss Howbiggen to administer. One remark, however, which had escaped him, made more impression on this fair person's mind than any other; and it was that in which the heiress of Blacktarn's name had been recited. What the character of any such impression might be may be best judged from her own words, as she said to herself, " Pooh! a babyish girl, indeed !- there is little in her. I dare say Colonel Renmore only sung to amuse her, just as he would shake a coral and bells to please a child; not that he felt any particular interest in her. Now, his attentions to me, I cannot help feeling, were most marked."

And thus, with a varied train of speculations, in which the self-love of the good spinster made itself pre-eminently conspicuous, she, after taking an approving side glance of herself in the long looking-glass that decorated the wall, retired to her "couch," no doubt to enjoy "rosy dreams," whose blush, perchance, might have won its tint from images of the Colonel's red coat.

Mr. Lawton, meanwhile, and Laura were on their way towards Blacktarn, and it may be supposed that the topic of their conversation was the all-engrossing one also of "the Colonel;" and no less so than has been witnessed in the instance of the estimable Miss Howbiggen.

"Hah! vastly agreeable, well-informed, and clever person!—vastly so!" observed Mr. Lawton, in his usual oracular way. . . . "Shall have great pleasure in shewing him all our improvements at Blacktarn,—vastly agreeable person!"

"Very much so, indeed, papa—very distinguished;" and had the light been a little stronger, the blush that rose in her cheek as she responded to this testimony of our hero's merits might possibly not have escaped her sagacious "papa's" observation.

"That duet between you was well managed," continued Mr. Lawton. "I did not think you could sing so well, my love,—never heard you in better voice, nor did you ever look better either—was much pleased—(ahem!)—much pleased!"

It was not impossible that Laura's conscience might have whispered that she had never yet been sensible of so worthy a claim upon her interest, in exerting herself to render her performance effective, as on the occasion in question. Whether this were the case or not, we cannot pretend to determine, nor are we quite sure what might have been the reply she would have made to Mr. Lawton's commendations of her. Possibly, "that he was mistaken in giving her more praise than was her

due;"—possibly, "that when there are two voices aiding one another, more effect is necessarily produced than where the unsustained efforts of a single one exists."

But, whatever her reply might have been, it was destined to be cut short, and her attention diverted into another channel, by seeing the figure of a man standing on the edge of the precipice which overhung the road, and to which she called her good sire's notice. But as we are likely to learn little concerning this person, whoever he might be, from Mr. Lawton, (conjuror, notwithstanding, as Dr. Esdaile pronounced him to be,) we will let the Blacktarn carriage drive forward on its homeward way, and climb up the steep, to gratify our curiosity in learning who the person could be that had attracted the attention of the Lawtons, and who had been seen by them from the carriage but dimly at the distance at which he stood, though the night was a beautiful and clear one.

It was, indeed, a serene and starlight night, fraught with themes for "heavenly mystic musings" in the minds of those who had an imagination to frame, and a spirit to penetrate, the secrets which the voice of night whispers. The ph losopher would listen to that tranquillizing whisper, to hear it wean him to musings far from a world of passion, and the sordid strife of life. The devout man

would contemplate those starry luminaries to witness in their boundlessness and splendour the wonderwork of infinite Wisdom, and join in the praise which their high harmonies poured in celebration of it. The metaphysician would seek to soar above the earth-ball on which his impatient spirit-wing was confined, and spring upward to scan those bright worlds, and read the tale of habitation. of life, of mortal or spiritual abode, that they represented. One while, perchance, he might deem, with earlier speculators, that those star-worlds were the resting-places and high haunts of happy departed souls from this earth sod; at another, he might amuse himself with deeming them the paradises of happy essences belonging to an angel or Peri world; at another, again, he might, as the most probable speculation, view in them but an infinite reflection of the tale of life, of human hopes and fears - of existence sprung from nothingness and ending in obscurity,-the fretful scene of worldlings, flatterers, and enthusiasts; the vain, the ambitiousthe weak, and the strong; the victims of despairand the laurel-crowned victors too, in the various race of fame-bards, warriors, and sages.

Such might, haply, have been the musings of the person before us; such, in succession, might have been his speculations, and more especially the lastmentioned feature of them appears to have been acceptable to his character of mind, as he broke from the silence in which he had for some little time stood, perusing the splendid volume of those starry heavens, and spoke as though he had arrived at the conclusion drawn from the sublime lesson he read in it.

It was not on the long-mooted speculation and fond reverie of whether the worlds above him were inhabited or not, that the contemplations of our philosopher were engaged; but granting this, the theme his speculations pursued was, " what was the sublime deduction to be drawn from a review of such a sea-such an infinity of human scenes of action and ambition;" and these speculations appeared to be those of a young poet analysing the subject of his own aspirations. To express this deduction, then, it was, that his thoughts found a tongue, as he exclaimed-" And what is the loftiest topic which a mind of ardent aspiration can engage it on most fondly? The darling dream of fame?" (So spoke the young poet.) "Alas! that guerdon of immortality-that hope of a consciousness after death of the glory that shall consecrate the name we leave behind us-what is their worth? what their extent? . . . It is to learn the truth conveyed in this-perchance mortifying-lesson that I look on yonder golden, glowing, and infinite volume outspread through Space before me. To me, that volume unfolds the page of Truth. Beauteous as sublime to contemplate, -yet stern, too, in its sublimity if conned aright,-it conveys to worldlings that hug themselves in the dream of earthly renown-but despair! Though indeed they are safe from this trial, unwilling alike and unable to extend their minds or raise their imaginations to read what I now read. . . . Ye 'starry-spangled' heavens, whisper ye not a truth that will make the proudest of earth's 'victors' and 'names' dwindle into nothingness? Tell me, (if indeed you are but worlds like this in which I breathe-namely, scenes of human strife and ambition)-declare, how manifold will be the spirits of those who were mighty in your respective earthly spheres, and who will meet the spirits too of this earth in that 'Hereafter,' where all departed souls shall meet,-that 'eternal after-state', in which the 'consciousness of the name they have left behind them' constitutes what we call immortality :- declare this, for the sake of that deduction I am about to draw from thence! Say, what myriads, what countless myriads, of fame's deputies will the boundless conclave of worlds on worlds send laurel-wreathed to that after-state, to lull themselves in dreams of the immortal guerdon they have won. Yes! and mark, now, the conclusion that must ensue. The individual treasure of fame-the guerdon being thus vastly and infinitely multiplied -is merged in its very infinitude! What becomes of its price, the price of its rarity, as regards an individual scene of ambition? It is lost in the infinity of its amount, thus endlessly swelled by the hosts of Fame's minions sent forth by the hosts of worlds too that throng the universal bound! The Homers, the Shakspeares, the Voltaires, the Cæsars, the Platos, the Napoleons, which we boast as so mighty, because so rare-how will they be obliged to own that the high price that man and themselves had set on them is lost, when they see themselves reflected in the countless host of bards, of sages, of warriors-of Cæsars, and Homers, and Platos, whose spirits come smiling to the shadowy 'after world,' soothed in the dream that they have built up names that are remembered in the scenes they have left! This 'Consciousness, which alone can constitute immortality,-how must its self-love be diminished, mocked, and crushed in the reflection that, after all, its 'immortality' is confined to one poor speck in the universe! While the next thought is, that if, indeed, it were not so confined, yet that there are such countless hosts who share it, that its rarity-(which was all that made it worth boasting of)-is merged-annihilated -and itself little worth the moil that sought it !" . . He paused awhile, when, in conclusion, he added, " Stern lesson from a lovely volume! Be it treasured in my heart to learn from it, the mere vanity of ambition, my own nothingness, and, yet more, the universal nothingness of fame, so panted for by man!"

"And, upon my word, a most sublime as well as just conclusion to arrive at, Mister 'Mystic,' Metaphysician, Star-gazer, or 'quocunque nomine gaudes!" "exclaimed the facetious Dr. Esdaile, (for it was no other than he,) that had come unawares upon our metaphysician, or, as the Greeks called it, "theoros," during the very characteristic utterance, of the speculations we have just heard him express.*

"Ah! what, you have found me out," answered Golefield, smiling; for it was himself to whom we have been listening.

"Found you out!" rejoined Esdaile; "ay, and I wish it might be to bring you back to yourself; for I'm inclined to think you have been lost in the sea of speculation on which you have just been launching. Come, it grows late; let us make the best of our way on towards Keswick."

So saying, Esdaile led the way back from the cliff where Golefield had wandered, to the road where Routhmore was waiting for him. It should seem that as the whole three, being invited by the beauty and serenity of the night, had proceeded

^{*} See note, Appendix, vol. ii.

on their starlight ramble from Mr. Howbiggen's, Golefield had loitered behind at a particular point of view, to indulge in his survey of so lovely a firmament, no less than in the speculations it suggested. Esdaile, however, finding he did not come onward with himself and Routhmore, bethought him of stepping back to rally the "metaphysical dreamer," and bring him back at once to them, and to himself too, as we have witnessed.

So the whole "trio" now proceeded on their way again towards Keswick, the Doctor taking good care not to let his fancy-loving friend lag behind to indulge in any more dreams; considering wisely that it would be time enough for him to dream when he had ensconced himself in that most appropriate realm of dreams - his bed! The Doctor was, of course, not sparing of his raillery, as he observed on the conclusion to which his friend's speculations had led him - " Despite all the sublimity of your flight, I do not envy you the bright lesson you have been borrowing from that starry volume; so you may keep your deductions of Truth to yourself. I do not want to be 'metaphysiked' out of my self-love. Be assured, happiness dwells more in Delusion than Truth !"

"Well, well," replied the benign speculator, "to please you, I will content myself with feeling that if my dreaming may possibly be little adaptable to the tastes—may little win the sympathies, or influence the sentiments of men, that at least I have won peace of mind for myself. This is no mean achievement of philosophy. However difficult, again, the lesson you dissent from may be to pursue, yet it is not the less 'truth.' I am satisfied with the possession of knowing what truth is, and deriving the benefit it alone can afford." So saying, the simple-minded philosopher remained silent; while his friend Routhmore rebutted somewhat more vigorously the proposition of the Doctor, as he said—

"Why, yes, with weak and vain minds, 'delusion' may indeed be happiness, and the only happiness. But not so with minds that have strength enough to meet the somewhat repulsive lesson of 'Knowing themselves.'"

Thus conversing, our trio proceeded on their romantic and lovely way, which won a new charm from the tranquil beauties in which so radiant a heaven had invested it, as flood and hill-top, sparkling rill and woods hanging over the slope above them, shone far and wide in the silvery lustre. So, bidding them each and all a "good night," we shall return to our hero, and place ourselves by his side once more, as he took his way from Howbiggen's along the meer bank, to his quarters at the village.

So much an object of interest as he had been

to the persons (especially to the fairer portion of them) whom he had just met, perhaps it may be asked whether that interest was in any way repaid or reciprocated by himself? Nor let him be accused of want of gallantry, even towards the gentle and fair heiress of Blacktarn, if we are obliged to confess for him that he felt no depth of interest (at least, such as that which implies tenderness or sentiment) at all! How could he, when the thought of Gertrude returned more dearly to him than that of any other living thing or subject, the moment he was again left to himself and his own meditations? The attentions he had shewn to any lady he had that evening met in society were such as he considered were uniformly due from him, as from every gentleman (who has any power of making himself agreeable), to any and every fair person he may chance to meet in the circles in which he moves. If idle and mistaken constructions are placed by others on such attentions, and an importance and a meaning attached to them which they were never intended to possess, those only are to be blamed who create such misconstructions; and if they should find themselves mistaken, they have themselves alone to thank for their rashness. Such are the considerations that suggest themselves in answering the question we had raised for the reader's interest; but as regards our hero, no such

thoughts for a moment occupied his mind, which was (as we have already testified to his honour) solely directed to the prevailing dream that cheered his existence—the thought of Gertrude.

With her image, then, before him, he made his way along the border of the meer, wishing, as he looked upon its silver-tinted sheen of beauty, that he had her by his side to look on it together with him, and enhance the pleasure he derived from the realm of loveliness around. When, lo! as he was thus waking up her image to relieve the solitude—as his thoughts were thus winning charm in a recurrence to her—strange as unexpected coincidence, a light figure skimmed across his path some little distance in advance of him, just as he had now diverged from the border of the meer into the road or lane that led to the village.

As well as the light permitted him to discern the figure, it was her own—it was Gertrude! But yet more was there reason for his attention being, and not very pleasantly either, excited; for not only was it occupied on the surprise occasioned by witnessing the lighter and more elegant figure already mentioned, but on the appearance of another form also, which though less distinctly traced, as standing more in the shadow of the bank-side, was recognised as that of somebody of the other sex.

The blood for a moment forsook Renmore's

cheek, which became pale as the dim and dewy sod on which he stood. But a moment more sufficed to banish all surmises unworthy of Gertrude's fidelity to himself, or that, in less generous or confiding bosoms than his own, would have whispered the busy tale of jealous apprehension. Whoever the person was in whose company Gertrude (if indeed it was Gertrude) had been, he had now left the spot, nor was traceable by our hero on his coming up to it, to clear away the doubt that hung round the circumstance of his surprise. The sound indeed of wheels was heard rapidly proceeding along, in the direction that led away from Buttermere; but this circumstance little assisted in relieving Renmore's doubts.

"Good heavens! it could not have been Quandish's figure. Impossible! and yet it was not altogether unlike. After all, it might not have been Gertrude that I saw,—the light, uncertain as it is, may have deceived me. No," he added, in a more impassioned tone; "it is impossible that I could mistake for any other than her own that airy form of grace and beauty which, fawn-like, skimmed across yonder night-glade, nor shook one trembling pearl-dew from the grass."

So spoke the language of the lover, as thus communing with himself, and thus perplexed, he regained the hostelrie of the Traveller's Rest.

CHAPTER IV.

"Lydia. Madam, I must tell you plainly, that had I no preference for any one else, the choice you have made would be my aversion.

"Mrs. M. What business have you, miss, with preference and aversion? It is safest in matrimony to begin with a little



more probable. Be this, however, as it may, Renmore shrunk back on seeing an object so obnoxious to him; and not desiring to be again brought in contact with him, if it could be helped, he desisted from entering the inn. Retiring from near the porchway, he turned again towards the meer border, in order to fill up the time until Quandish should have rid the hostelrie of his disgustful presence. "It is that fellow!" exclaimed Renmore on first perceiving him; "I will prolong my walk till he is gone. So I suppose he is still harping on Gertrude's obduracy ;-or possibly he may have teased her into uttering something that he has construed into encouragement. At any rate, he is closeted with dame Wetherby as usual, and of course his suit with Gertrude is the theme of their conversation. I take it, it is but a losing game after all that he pursues-the poor dullard !- he fancies he is surprisingly cunning in having won the mother on his side, and as a promoter of his suit. He had better have won the daughter. I wonder if it was really he whom I saw just now quit her. Pooh! if it was, what matters it? He is as far as ever from rendering himself acceptable to her. She may have said, perhaps, an encouraging word to get rid of him; meantime, he is plying his suit with the weak, bigoted woman, her mother, stupidly eager to make her press upon her daughter an encouragement of his addresses. Blockhead! he is like many others I have known, who 'begin at the wrong end' in a courtship—who begin with the 'approbation of the parents.' Pshaw! the way is, to win the affections of the fair object herself first of all, and then leave the battle to her, to win over the parents to acquiesce in the circumstance 'on which their daughter's happiness depends'—ha! ha!"

Renmore laughed scornfully as he contrasted with conscious triumph his own superior knowledge of the human heart to that of his rival in winning the object of their mutual endeavours. " Now, a blunderer," he continued, "or a shy being in matters delicate as this, having few qualities perhaps to make themselves acceptable to the daughter, will fortify themselves (they imagine) in gaining the parents on heir side. They will find, in nine cases out of ten, I fancy, that the old adage of placing ' the cart before the horse' is verified in the instance of their clumsy and impolitic courtship. So, all venturous suitors, be admonished by me !- gain first of all the mastery of the fair creature's heart and mind whom you would win,-be it for her charms, or her fortune, or both,-and you will then have an ally in herself, that, however much the parents may be disinclined towards you, will win you the victory over them in the end. But stop," he continued, checking himself in the words which had

been elicited by his scorn for a being so much beneath him as Quandish in any attribute that can render a man acceptable in the eyes of others. " Stop! though the sentiments I have uttered may be, generally speaking, true, yet is my scorn for this fellow unalloyed by any apprehension that Gertrude may perhaps be as little mine as his? For if it was not this Simmonds, or Quandish. (or whatever he may call himself,) that I saw take leave of her just now, it was still some one perhaps more happy in her affections than I can reckon myself. Yet I can scarcely believe this, if I have been able to calculate aright on the ascendancy I think I have won over her mind and heart. Yes; I know-I cannot doubt that she loves me. How many little things have shewn it. When has her foot of late mounted the hillslope but it was sure to wander where mine met it ?- and then the blush-the smile-the 'delightful confusion' when we met - and that mutual chord of feeling, too, between us-my affection (though he knows it not) for Fenton. Her look has thanked me as I spoke of him thus kindly, -thanked me from her heart,-thanked me with the tear that would furtive glisten in her eye,thanked me with her gratitude-with her esteemher confidence-her love."

Such was the train of musings in which Renmore's mind was led, as he paced along the brink of those silver-glistening waters of the moonlight lake. He came at length to the rock overhanging the cave where we remember Mike had moored his shallop, after rowing the "venerable stranger" thither, concerning whom the curiosity of Golefield and his friend had been awakened. Here he sate down, his eye dreaming on the dim as lovely expanse of waters, and his heart pursuing a dream as dim, though haply less beautiful, in the various train of thoughts in which his mind was now led.

The spot at once waked up the image of old Mike, together with that look of significance with which he had accompanied all he imparted to him, whether as regarded past or future destinies. With the first was, somehow or other, connected the thought of the good curate of Lorton; though it must be left to time to disclose what could be the link that bound the circumstances of Mike's narrative, or its subject, with the name of Fenton.

How many painful associations arise in the mind from the mere accident of a single untoward circumstance affecting the heart or spirits! Such is the remark suggested to us by witnessing the "change" that had thus suddenly come over the "spirit" of Renmore's dream. But a little while ago, at the Howbiggen party, he was comparatively happy—his mind at ease—his turmoil of spirit lulled. But this sudden circumstance concerning Gertrude, which he had witnessed on his return to the hostelrie, had been sufficient to embitter the tone of his feelings, and damp his more pleasurable dream.

Such is the constitution of the human mind, that seldom is it that one troublous or displeasing thought is awakened without its being followed by a host of others. And if this is witnessed as almost universally the case in analyzing our human composition, it is more especially so where (as in the instance of Renmore) the mind has been but transitorily basking in the gleam of content or pleasure, and makes its abode more readily, because more necessarily, with pain than with happiness.

All we are saying is but an illustration of the humble adage, "misfortunes never come alone." The converse, indeed, is often equally true, that fortune "rains" her favours on us. A spark of pleasure lit up by a cheerful sunbeam, for instance, that rejoices the heart no less than the eye, often kindles a whole train of happy associations. But however smoothly the dream of joy may wing it on its bright course, it is a thing of such caprice, so unstable and so mutable, that let but the least hindrance occur to check it, and it is precipitated down the abyss of care, along whose giddy edge it disported. What little obstacles, (for example,) as

petty as unforeseen, have occurred to mar the ardent race of success, of ambition, of prosperity, of pleasure! Like the hindrance of a mere pebble to one of those rapid engines that modern invention has called into use, as it glows and hurries on its level track—on it urges, ardent as rapid, in its strength,—a moment more—a crash—a shriek of those whom it whirls with it—its race is checked—its pride and strength are overthrown,—it is precipitated over the steep, and peace and life are sacrificed with it. What was the "let," or obstacle, to its smooth, and as yet unimpeded career? a poor, paltry pebble, flung in mere wanton carelessness by some idle boy as he ran whistling past, satchel in hand, to school.

Thus was Renmore's mind swayed with many turbid, many tender thoughts. And who can doubt that he loved with sincerity, when his uneasiness at witnessing the object of his affections in the companionship of some one else is considered? But he had now returned to the hostelrie; and as he approached the door, he saw through the dim and dubious light a form emerge from the porch and wend its way onward to the village.

"What!" he exclaimed; "has his conference with dame Wetherby but just closed? Has this Quandish been unwilling to take his leave till now? Well! Gertrude—unless she has become more disposed to listen to him—must expect to meet still more remonstrance, and recommendation in his behalf, from her 'loving' parent than hitherto, or I am mistaken as to the result of this long closeting of our sanctimonious suitor with her!"

So saying, Renmore entered the hostelrie, and proceeded at once to his chamber, as he took up a candlestick that was standing on a mahogany slab by the passage side at the top of the landing-place. As, however, he stood lighting it by another which flamed by its side, he could not avoid overhearing a conversation which it was impossible for him to mistake was being conducted between Mrs. Wetherby and her daughter. He at once concluded what the topic was, and also that Mrs. Wetherby, after having taken leave of the preacher, had sought out the room to which her daughter had retired for the night, and had accordingly "entertained" her with the topic that, we cannot doubt, (in spite of all our hero's "fond misgivings,") was of all others the most calculated to mar her repose.

Such were the conjectures of Renmore, who had now lit his candle, and passed onward to the room he occupied. If he had gleaned enough from this parley to know that the pseudo-preacher was still as unacceptable to Gertrude as he had hitherto been, it occurred to him, now, that if he had any rival in her affections, and if such rival were the person he had witnessed in her company a short time past, yet that it could not be Quandish. It must have been some one else.

Meantime, various and unsettled as his surmises might be on this last point, they gave way for the present to the concern of which he was sensible in Gertrude's behalf, when he reflected on the additional constraint and coercion that had doubtless been just exercised on her feelings as regarded Quandish. His concern was indeed due to the lovely subject of its interest. He well knew that the native independence of her spirit must have sustained a severe conflict with her sense of filial duty in combating any proposition urged by her parent.

In truth, his surmises were just; and we may add, that however deferentially the clearer-sighted girl may have suggested, not only her inability to esteem the preacher, but her misgivings as to the alleged purity of his character, her remonstrance only served to incense her blinder parent, and was regarded as so much dictation. The pique that we may remember dame Wetherby had exhibited that morning, on the subject of Esdaile's remark concerning Gertrude's appearance at church, had no doubt instigated the dame to make her daughter "feel her authority," as she would have expressed it. Accordingly, the unpalatable suit had been urged with more imperativeness than ever, and a speedy compliance with it required. The more

gently the remonstrance of Gertrude was expressed, the more it unfortunately irritated her bigoted and irascible parent, who felt a tacit reproach to herself in the superior calmness and address of her daughter. The suggestion of such a circumstance on the part of Gertrude, as that she, her parent, could possibly be mistaken in the real character of the preacher, or of any one, so much longer as she had lived in the world than her daughter, was above all things, a subject of angry excitement to the sagacious and pious dame.

Mrs. Wetherby may yet have to learn that years do not always confer discretion. Gertrude's very calmness and affection of manner was construed into a spirit of provocation, and as being merely adopted to render her opposition the more vexatious. In fact, as Mrs. Wetherby grew more excited and angry, she was of course less able to listen to reason, or the placid remonstrance of either justice or affection; and it is difficult to say whether Gertrude's chief concern at the termination of this painful and profitless conference was, at being thus unwillingly obliged to differ with her parent and regret her weakness of mind, (for Gertrude forgave her anger in compassion for her blindness,) or to reprobate the being on whose account she had been subjected to so much vexation.

One of the chief beauties of Gertrude's charac-

ter, in which all were so estimable, was her filial love and sense of duty as regarded her parent. She was, in truth, all lovely in mind as in person. She did not exercise opposition towards the unkind and unreasonable constraint attempted to be imposed on her, so much as feel regret that she was obliged to exercise it. Her natural excellence of disposition, even had it not been cultivated and nurtured aright by the guidance of one so virtuous as the curate of Lorton, would have influenced her to feel thus. But she felt that no law of paternal control could force her into resigning the exercise of her reason and judgment, to say nothing of her tastes or affections; and both reason and judgment condemned and detected, by a secret whispering too strong to be controlled or silenced, the pseudo-preacher. There was a malice in his smile, a design in his countenance, in which she could not be mistaken. "He must be a bad man," she thought, "who can harbour malice or design, and both are too strongly written on his brooding, discontented brow to be misinterpreted."

Female fear alone would have been a sufficient excuse, she felt, for repudiating such a man. But all her misgivings, all her unwilling resistance to the demands made on her, won countenance in her mind from the feeling that not Fenton himself would reprove her for acting in opposition to her parent, when her resistance was thus conscientiously dictated. For she exercised it not only in her own behalf, but because she thought it due to her parent's essential happiness that she should be spared the future regret of having sacrificed her child to one who was unworthy of her, though that parent was too much blinded to be alive to the arts practised on her.

Strengthened and fortified with these reflections, with the consciousness she was acting rightly, and that Fenton—the best and wisest of men she had ever known—would deem her justified in a gentle yet firm resistance to the wrong done her parent no less than herself, Gertrude, when alone and in the silence of her chamber, which her mother had now left, poured forth her spirit to the Power that supports the weakest,—that vindicates, sooner or later, the cause of assailed innocence.

This debt being paid, she recurred to thoughts which her heart more happily contemplated. She recurred to her love for Renmore, and no less to the consideration that he was indeed a being worthy to be loved. And was she wrong in drawing that conclusion? How much had his heart and mind been laid open to her; and what had she witnessed there that was not exalted, noble, and benevolent? If such a man were bad or criminal by circumstance, yet he never could have been so by nature. Whatever his errors might have been, look but in

his countenance—hear him but express the dictate of his heart and spirit, and you "would forget them all," as the poet says. It was a testimony even in favour of his being naturally good, and naturally inclined to appreciate what is good—his love for herself. Did the pseudo-preacher love her? Not he! His base and sordid spirit was incapable of any sentiment so exalted, so praiseworthy.

How forcibly is the consideration suggested to us, then,—though it too often escapes that of the world,—that man may be "guilty" without being naturally a villain. Yet the world—the reckless. half-judging, undiscriminating, and unfeeling world—too often condemns a man wholly where he is only partially guilty;—too often deems the guilt which is induced by his misfortune to be the crime also of his nature!

Had Renmore known all that thus passed in her mind as regarded the tribute it paid to himself, he would have slept happily, and been lulled in dreams the brightest. But his conjectures relative to the vexation and regret she must be experiencing, in consequence of the late conference with her mother, occupied him too much to permit him to find rest. His head was not more turbidly tossed on his pillow than his heart was disturbed by these considerations on her account; and in which was again afforded a testimony of the sincerity of his attachment for her-

"Would it were morning," he exclaimed, "that I might hasten to her side, and aid in expelling from her mind, or at least diminishing, the uneasiness that besieges it! I will urge to her the expediency of letting our union be as speedy as possible, that I may remove her at once from this spot, and the disgustful importunity to which she is here subject. We will hasten abroad. And Mike! you shall accompany us if you will, and own that when I smiled at fate and your forlorn auguries, I cherished confidence not without justice."

With these thoughts, which took their colour from the ardour and sanguine hope that were natural to our hero's character, the time winged on its way till the rosy dawn had shed its blush on the meer waters. He started from his bed and flung open the casement, challenged by the sun-rays that streamed in through it, and looked hastily out upon the wide glowing scene before him. The restlessness and fever of his mind caught but a momentary sense of the freshening charm respired from without, and the gale that played with his manly dark locks imparted little of its balm to his throbbing heart or brain. His soul was already on the wing to meet Gertrudeto find out Gertrude-to break itself forth in Gertrude's behalf no less than its own.

We need not express that his views as regards her were far from those merely of selfishness. No; the care of self, if it whispered to his conscience, was yet drowned in the louder pleadings of his just affection. Often, as has been heretofore witnessed, had he risen thus early to hasten forth over the hill, where Gertrude was wont to perform her jocund rural task of leading her kine afield. The summons of her cheerful horn, as its melodious echoes wound over the maze of flood and bank, had been the signal to call him forth. But he listened for it now in vain. "I fear all is not well!" he said, as with hasty step and beating heart he hied forth to the slope that overlooked the farm, and in which direction, as we may remember, the lovely herdmistress was accustomed to drive her kine forth on their daily range.

Leaving Renmore, then, to follow upon her track, we will anticipate him in joining her. Never till the loathed and feared pseudo-preacher had crossed her parent's threshold had she known what it was to feel the pure lively current of her native buoyancy and gladness checked or sullied. It had flowed cheerful and untainted as any silvery rill that poured at her feet from the rock above her, and where her cattle stooped in their wanderings to drink. The new and happier tide of feeling which had arisen in her breast,—taught to

flow, as it had been, by her affection for one so worthy to awaken it as our hero,—had washed away till now the taint her spirit had grieved over, in the check to its happiness afforded by Quandish's distasteful suit. The more than usual determination her parent had evinced on the preceding evening to press it, occasioned her a struggle more painful than she had for some time experienced; for she felt that her fate was coming to some crisis, and that if she were not permitted to find peace or freedom of choice at home, she would be obliged to seek refuge elsewhere. And her thoughts directed them naturally to our hero and Fenton by turns, as those from whom she must seek protection and succour.

Such were the reflections of disquiet and pain which she experienced, and which had no right to intrude on a bosom, pure, guileless, and unoffending as her own. She had, as usual, gone forth on her early matin task, but with step less buoyant, as her heart was less free and light. She had walked silently along on the track of her kine, forgetful to rouse them as usual with the glad challenge of the horn that now hung listlessly by her side. Those joyous waking rays of morn smiled not on her, as wont, to awaken the answer of her smile in return, nor to light up in the bright contagion of their joy her pure and spotless heart. Those sparkling dew-pearls had shone not more

boundlessly around her than erewhile had glowed the wide, unbounded joy of her spirit. Those rosy-tinted dews, like tears wept by roses, glittering over the sward which her light step skimmed-they had shone not more radiant than her bright and happy thoughts. The balm-breath of earth's incense, steamed up in its matin tribute of fragrance from herb and flower, was not fresher than had been but lately the pure glow of her spirit that hailed it. The carol of a thousand feathered songsters around her path over woodland and blossomed mead was not more joyful than the spiritsong her heart used to pour forth in its happiness and health. But her spirit-song was now jarred with discord, and the light on her brow clouded, as she roamed onward with her herd, she heeded not whither; when suddenly a gaunt form strode across her path, as she started and looked to see who it was that rose thus phantom-like before her. It was old Mike, who saluted her somewhat abruptly, as he smiled and said-

"What, how! my fair mistress of the herd! whither are your thoughts wandering? for surely so they are, since you perceive not your cattle have strayed along yonder stony ridge, where nor bird finds seed, nor beast pasturage, nor has living thing a dwelling, save only old Mike in the cell below in the rock-side?"

And here the old mariner began, as he best might, reclaiming the truant kine from their wanderings, while Gertrude, now being recalled to herself, thanked Mike for his kind offices, and wound her horn to the speedy recovery of her herd from their devious rambling.

"And may the old man ask where the lovely herd-mistress's thoughts might be, that they forgot her favourite care of the poor things whose lowings now answer her signal?"

"Nay, Mike," replied Gertrude, attempting to assume some of her wonted cheerfulness, "a wizard like yourself needs not to ask that question, since he can (as I'm told) read the thoughts themselves of mankind;" and so saying, she hastened on towards her herd, wishing the old mariner good morning, and thanking him again for helping her to reclaim her cattle that had wandered.

"Well, well!" said the old man, looking after her; "there is doubtless that in thy heart that renders solitude just at present preferable to the company of any one, or rather any but one. And yet," continued the old man, "I have seen her on the hill before now, and accosted her, but have never witnessed her fair brow so clouded, her step so listless, nor her cheerfulness so forced, as this morning. I should not wonder if that hypocrite saint that vexes her with his suit is the cause

of this turmoil to the poor lass. But let him look to it;—it is enough that she is beloved by one whom this Quandish hates, but who is dear to Mike as though he were his own child. Let him look to it—how he harms the one or the other."

Thus muttering to himself, the old man strode along towards his cell, pausing a moment on the cliff-brow ere he descended the rude steps in the rock, as he looked back on the track of Gertrude, when he observed two forms instead of one.

"Ay, I thought so! When was the Beauty of Buttermere ever left long alone but that gallant there was not by her side?" And the old man paused a moment as he stood looking at Gertrude and our hero, for it was himself that had now joined her, until they had turned round the slope and were hidden from him, when he exclaimed, as he hurried down the steps, and at the same time broke from the somewhat painful musing into which he had fallen-" Poor children! You are worthy a better fate. Formed for each other, in beauty of mind as of person, no wonder a secret spell has brought you together,-no wonder you love. What shall ye not yet suffer for one another! Your sufferings as yet are light to what they shall be-to what old Mike would gladly veil from his dream . . . poor girl! . . . the innocent, the beautiful, to be the sport of such a

sentence! And he too . . but did I not warn him? What infatuation was it led him to mock my superstition, as he called it, and point to hope and security, that I fear must never be his. But who can talk to one that loves, with a hope of being listened to? Did I not warn him, I say, that this frenzy or love would be fatal tohim would prove the rosy clue that should lead him into the trammels he may never escape from? Innocent and lovely betrayer of him, must you, too, fall into the pit that yawns for him? I would not think so. I would avert the doom, or at least protract it. I would thwart the enemy, the bloodthirsty Judas, that would wreak his hate now on you both. If I cannot save you eventually,-if I cannot avoid the end,-I may at least aid you for a time; but for what? To keep up the mere fallacy of a fond hope. It is but vain-vain after all."

So saying, the old man descended to his cell, while we, meantime, will return to Gertrude, whom we have witnessed as having been joined by our hero. He had for some time looked for her in vain, since she had wandered so much from her usual track; but on hearing the notes of her horn awakened on the occasion of Mike's timely intervention, he had turned his steps in the direction whither they guided him, and had at length come up to her.

All that his conjectures had whispered relative to the conference between herself and her parent on the preceding evening were verified in the disclosure he now obtained from her.

"By heavens, I should not love you!" he exclaimed, passionately, "if I did not counsel you at once to place yourself beyond the reach of this persecution—I can call it nothing else."

Gertrude looked at him inquiringly, as if to ask what was the course he would suggest, as he continued, scornfully—"the persecution of this saint! For who does not know that of all persecution the 'religious' is the worst? I, perhaps, know something more of this saint than yourself."

"Speak!" she replied, earnestly; "tell me what—and confirm my just apprehensions of his dark and dangerous character. I could then convince my mother. I have long surmised this."

"That is," replied Renmore, slightly hesitating, "I know enough of him to tell you that your apprehensions are far from groundless."

"Do you know him, then? or have you known anything relative to his history?"

"No, . . . no; I, of course, know nothing of him further than what I have heard, which is merely this—that his sanctimonious character of preacher is a 'part' he 'plays' for his convenience, and in order to live by the credulity of others. This I

have heard—in fact, not much more than your surmises have conjectured; but enough to prove them right."

"Then you can tell me nothing further than I have already suggested to my mother?"

"Why-that is-no, no ; . . . certainly, I would recommend you to say nothing to her of my having confirmed your ill augury concerning this man. It would only exasperate her further. Your safer and better course is at once to avoid the reach of his importunities, by quitting your parent's roof, and placing yourself under Mr. Fenton's care, and eventually under that of myself-your destined husband. Leave it to time to convince Mrs. Wetherby; nor will it require any very long time to do so, for (mark me!) the moment all hopes of winning you on his part are lost to him, he will at once fling aside the sanctimonious veil under which he has hitherto appeared to her, the better to practise on her credulity, and shew himself in all the naked deformity of his natural ferocity and revengeful character."

"Then you do know his character to be this?"
again inquired Gertrude, earnestly, not altogether
without surprise that Renmore did not follow up
more decidedly his condemnation of the pseudosaint.

"Why, yes," he replied; "I have reason to think so,—that is, I have heard—"

" Heard what? do tell me!"

"My dear love," resumed Renmore, "I consider it the part of generosity never to accuse people on mere hearsay; and I therefore will not degrade myself either in my own or your esteem by asserting what I could not precisely prove. Suffice it to say, I have heard the basest accounts of this man; be content with this. Be satisfied further, that it is your duty to yourself, to your parent, to myself, let me add, who love you, and to whom you are betrothed, to place yourself beyond the reach of any further importunities of this man."

The tone of candour with which Renmore had uttered these words, warmed as it was into earnestness for her welfare, and passionate with the spirit of affection, entirely removed from her mind the sense of surprise that the involuntary hesitation of his reply concerning Quandish had occasioned a moment past. He had at the same time taken her hand in his own, as he continued—" Hesitate not, then, to seek the succour and protection of Mr. Fenton's roof as a first step, and before our union enables me to remove you with myself."

"I have sought this succour; I have already imparted to him the embarrassment under which I have been placed. It was but yesterday evening I took leave of him——"

"Then it was Fenton I saw you part from

as I returned from the party at which I had been?"

"Yes, yes; he brought me back from Lorton, where I had passed the day. There was a time when scarcely a week passed without my rambling over the hills to Lorton. Is he not as a father to me? Until lately, until this Quandish has influenced my mother's mind, I had been permitted by her to go to Lorton; but of late—"

... "She has, of course, interdicted your going. But yesterday you took the opportunity of his coming over here to accompany him back on his invitation?"

Gertrude nodded assent, as Renmore proceeded—
"And have you confided to him the secret of our attachment? as well as told him of this disgustful hypocrite's pertinacity in seeking you for himself?"

"I have indeed informed him you told a humble village girl you loved her, and——"

. . . " And did he not believe you?" . . .

Gertrude hesitated in a confusion that rendered her yet more beautiful, as the tear and the blush at once spoke the fears and the hopes of love; while Renmore clasped her to his heart as he continued, "Yes; I know all he must have told you namely, all you have already surmised when I offered you this hand—that the difference of our station in life rendered the sincerity of my avowal doubtful. There is but one way to convince him: for you, dearest, you, I trust, place too much reliance on me to doubt me. There is but one way to convince him-that is, for us to hasten to him, to kneel at his feet, implore his blessing before the altar of heaven, and pray him to unite these hands of ours which now clasp each other, in an indissoluble bond. This is but just to yourself,-to the truth of my affection for you. This is the only secure way you have of placing yourself beyond the reach of the embarrassment occasioned you, not more by these distasteful addresses, which render your life fraught with fear and pain, than the blind coercion of a parent that acts more from ignorance than unkindness, as I am willing to believe. Have you strength of mind-have you resolution-to follow this course ?- to remove from your parent's roof?-notwithstanding the reproaches that will be showered on you in consequence of such a step, on the part of her mistaken feeling?"

"I have fortitude," replied Gertrude, " to bear all trials, where conscience tells me I am justified, and for one on whom my heart is bestowed." And as she spoke, her expressive and beautiful countenance wore an aspect of mingled resolution and affection, as she answered Renmore's glance, that impressed him with scarcely less awe than love.

"It is enough; that brief sentence has repaid

me for a world of anxious thought, of painful yet dear solicitude, felt since the first moment I saw you. My dearest, my proudest hope was, then, to call you one day mine. If death itself was to be my unavoidable doom,"—(and here his voice trembled, not more from certain melancholy fore-bodings that stole over his heart, than the emotion his love for her occasioned,)—"as the bitter balance to that joy I feel in possessing you; yet would I not forego it, if I must also forego the pride, the rapture, which swells my heart in having won you."

Well might the person who had qualifications worthy of engaging the affections, and yet more, winning the heart, of the Beauty of Buttermere,—the idol of universal praise, love, and admiration,—give vent to his feelings as Renmore had. And he was about to proceed to appoint the period of her throwing herself on Fenton's protection, as a first step to his joining her with a view to their union,—when the surprise and dismay of both himself and Gertrude were occasioned by the sudden appearance of two persons, concerning whose intrusion at this moment, together with its results, we must consult our next chapter.

CHAPTER V.

"That is good deceit
Which mars him first that first intends deceit."
SHAKSPEARE.

Dame Wetherby had, on the preceding evening, suggested to Quandish that he might step up on the following morning and learn the result of her conference with the "headstrong girl," as she termed Gertrude. The preacher, nothing loath to obey the summons, did not fail to repair betimes to the hostelrie, and, with a more than usually sanctimonious twang, proceeded to the "sacred" subject of his visit, after having duly inquired concerning the health of the widow Wetherby in the first instance.

"And what comforting words hath my esteemed hostess for her poor servant?" he asked. "Hath she balm—yea, balm even of Gilead—to pour into his wounded spirit? Hath she prevailed with the damsel aught in his behalf? Say not 'nay.'"

So spoke, or spake as himself would have said,

the saintly Quandish; while dame Wetherby thus "made answer and said,"—giving back twang for twang, and prosiness for cant. They had walked from the hostelrie by the pathway through the fields skirting the dairy attached to the farm premises.

"A 'wayward spirit!' a 'stiff-necked generation!' good Mr. Quandish, I am sorely grieved to say,-ay, and wise in her own conceit. Alas! well saith the wise king, that a headstrong and vain offspring is a reproach unto its mother. Such is the return for my too much leniency,-my too little restraint of her wayward will. But be of good cheer; a parent's authority may yet be felt,-yea, be of good cheer." (Quandish sighed deeply, perhaps weary of Mrs. Wetherby's "lengthiness," perhaps out of regret that his suit fared so lamely.) " Nay," let not thy heart fail nor thy sperit be grieved. The stubborn generation, I say again, may yet be brought under the yoke. Verily, she has had too much her own way. Her goings out and her comings in have hitherto been unrestrained. At one time she must needs take it into her head to go over and pay a visit to the Lorton minister, Mr. Fenton." (The mock-dissenter's face here put on a due grimace of surprise and repugnance.) "At another, she will ramble all alone along the hills to Keswick, or Helvellyn, or where she liketh, -yea, and this freedom and independence, she will

say, 'suiteth' her character, and maketh her life happy! . . . I will soon put a bar across these truancies. Trust me, the 'stiff-necked generation' shall be reclaimed to reason, and a knowledge of what is best for her interests."

The pious Quandish assented to this proposition of using a little gentle restraint, while at the same time he uttered another sigh, — or snort rather through his nose, meant for a sigh,—as he continued, "But believe me, I should grieve to think the damsel was put to any pain on my account. You may credit me when I say I love and cherish her in my heart too well to desire to see her happiness (or what she considereth so) abridged. Be not too rigorous. Nay, prithee, treat her fondly, and proceed gently and gradually."

"It will be for her good—for her good. She will thank me for it hereafter. Who knows? it may be saving her from the snares of the ungodly to secure her union to a chosen and blessed worker in the field of salvation."

Yet another sigh, or nasal snort, expressive at once of assent and compunction on the part of the "chosen" preacher, (certainly not "chosen" by Gertrude,) drowned the remainder of the conscientious dame's discourse, while it also served to drown Quandish's secret propensity to laugh at her zenl in the cause of himself and—religion.

"Nay, proceed gently, gently, dear sister Wetherby," he once again said, looking as sanctimoniously doleful, and awkwardly tender, as any pseudo-saint ever did in venting a piece of hypocritical benevolence. "I once again tell thee, and verily do counsel thee from the bottom of my heart, (where no guile is!) not to be too rigorous with the maiden; albeit we are told that importunity in the end doeth much; and 'knock, and it shall be opened' is a text that may yet be as balm to our hopes. But, yet again I charge thee, be not harsh with the damsel. Thy too-kindly meant zeal will be ill understood, and only occasion a more determined resistance on her part."

"The Jezabel!" exclaimed dame Wetherby, forgetting the language of the "saint" in that of the angry no less than weak "sinner." "The Jezabel! she is not a person to be won over by too much leniency; not she."

But just at this moment, two forms appeared in sight, at the end of the pathway along which dame Wetherby and the "pseudo-preacher" were concocting their pious plans. The latter started involuntarily as he descried them, and forgot at the moment his sanctimonious character, and its accompanying style of speaking, as he ejaculated in his surprise—

"The devil!" ... when he continued, checking

himself—" Ahem !—I mean, good Mrs. Wetherby, to say that the devil, the enemy of mankind, (ahem !) is ever at work to thwart our good intentions. . . . Dost thou see," he continued, with affected composure, "at the end of yonder green glade, where it meets our pathway, those two figures? Tell me aright, whom takest thou them to be?"

"Why, bless me, if it is not my disobedient daughter walking with the guestat my inn—Colonel Renmore."...

. . . "Colonel Renmore!" ejaculated Quandish, with a sneering and demoniac laugh.

"Why, is not that his name?" inquired Mrs. Wetherby, mistaking the meaning of his merriment.

"Oh yes, that is his name!" replied Quandish,
—"and," he added to himself, "it is not." This
circumstance, however, he was withheld from
avowing, by the consideration (as has been previously explained) that if he on his part had any
exposure to make as regarded Renmore, yet
that he himself was liable to a similar retaliation.
He therefore bridled his tongue, though burning
with rage and vexation at the thought which
now at once took possession of his mind, at
seeing in Renmore the favoured rival of his—not
affections indeed—but interested plans as regarded
securing "the Beauty" and her fortune.

Of course, Quandish judged of Renmore in this respect by himself. He could not imagine, knowing our hero's exigencies, that he had anything but interested views at heart as regarded Gertrude. He would have mocked at the idea of that deep and real affection Renmore entertained for her—a sentiment of which the grovelling spirit of the pseudosaint was incapable. The conviction at once flashed upon his mind, that Renmore was the person to whom Gertrude's faith had been plighted. He knew well the immeasurable superiority of qualifications, both of manner and person, as compared with his own, which his rival possessed, and his accompanying influence and ascendancy over the female mind.

If ever a spirit of persecution as regarded our luckless hero had possessed the savage no less than dogged spirit of Quandish, it was now entertained by him tenfold. "Let him," he muttered to himself, in almost breathless agitation, as his sullen features became yet more revolting in their fiendish expression—"Let him take heed, and not be behind hand in paying the money with which he buys of me the temporary respite of his doom!—let him take heed, the day is not far off!"

Not Shylock himself could have contemplated the claiming his "bond" with more demoniac exultation in case of its forfeit, than Quandish felt on the present occasion, as he looked forward to revenging himself on the obstacle to his dearest worldly objects, in case he should fail to pay him the unhallowed debt of the "hush-money," of which he had extorted the promise,

While these thoughts passed rapidly through the breast of the "preacher," dame Wetherby's eyes had not been idle in glancing over his countenance, where she perceived an expression of excitement so opposite to that which he generally wore (at least in her presence) of sanctimonious meekness and humility, that her fears were in some degree awakened, as she demanded—

"Why, what is the matter, good Mr. Quandish? You seem to look very earnestly towards my daughter and the Colonel. Is there any cause of alarm? He is a perfect gentleman, and a friend, Gertrude tells me, of Mr. Fenton."

"Oh no!" replied Quandish, hastily, while he endeavoured to resume his smoothness of aspect; "Oh no! deem not, good Mrs. Wetherby, I imagined aught of alarm was to be apprehended from a 'perfect gentleman and friend of Mr. Fenton."

And here his voice assumed a semi-sardonic tone, which passed with Mrs. Wetherby for better than it was, — namely, the pious whine with which Quandish generally spoke in addressing her.

"No," he continued, significantly;—" though we can never be too much on our guard in trusting the innocence and inexperience of youth with the spirit that has been versed in the intrigue and iniquity of the world; yet I did not regard your guest with any feeling of alarm,—further than that (let me avow it) of possibly putting me aside in my suit with your daughter, and (who knows?) proposing himself to her; for verily a monarch might be proud of her as a consort!"

"Impossible! she knows her station too well in life to listen to any proposals of alliance with a person so much her superior in circumstances and rank."

"He, he!" chuckled out Quandish, endeavouring at the same time to stifle the laugh that fain strove to force its way. "Love (he may tell her, nevertheless) may place them on a level; and ... but hush—here they come. I say again, if I appeared momentarily agitated, it was to think I should be (poor and humble person as I am) eclipsed and put back in the maiden's esteem, and my hopes frustrated as regards my suit towards her, by one against whose rank and superior recommendations, alas! I cannot stand."

"Rest contented, then," replied dame Wetherby, with an authoritative toss of the head. "I was alarmed at first to see you regard my child as though she were a victim in the hands, possibly, of a betrayer."

"A victim! so she may be yet," muttered Quandish to himself; while the dame proceeded—

"But if your fears were entertained alone at the apprehension that my Gertrude could possibly think of the Colonel as an alliance to which she has a right to aspire, I will soon see if I cannot check all such fantastic notions—proud spirit though she has!"

Here the dame ceased, while Quandish was satisfied on his part that he had uttered enough to place the hostess of the "Traveller's Rest" on her guard against the views of her "distinguished guest," as regarded her daughter, without proceeding to condemn him at once by any exposure which might be at the present moment impolitic as regarded himself.

Just at this moment, the path by which Gertrude and Renmore had been walking brought them, at the turning which was now taken by Mrs. Wetherby and Quandish, precisely in contact with these two last-mentioned persons.

Had Renmore and the Beauty met the fabled Phantoms that haunt the flood and fell of the wild region through which they had of late so constantly wandered in each other's company, they could not have been more scared at the moment than they now were, at seeing two persons of all others the last they would have desired to meet.

The Beauty regarded both her parent and her slighted suitor at a glance, while an involuntary expression of surprise, mingled with alarm, escaped her. But her wonted pride soon came to her support, as she witnessed the storm gathering in her parent's brow, and against which she knew she must make, as she had already been obliged to do, a firm, yet respectful resistance, in order to save her from the life of painful constraint which would be entailed on her should she succumb.

As for Quandish, he had darted but one glance of reproach and rancour at Gertrude, just as the fiend might be supposed to regard the brow of a seraph, in mingled envy and hatred; and his regard, then, was instantly fixed on that of his rival. Their eyes met,—on the part of our hero with surprise and some confusion at the suddenness of the meeting;—on the part of his persecutor with a look of mingled menace, malignant significance, and anger. Renmore quickly regained his self-possession, as he said, with his usual calmness and ease of manner,

"Ah, Mrs. Wetherby! Ah, Mr. Quandish!—good day to you. An agreeable spot this for a little stroll to view the scenery; and my good fortune," he added to his hostess, "not only hap-

pened to lead my steps in the same direction as those of your daughter, but also to meet you."

"My daughter is much honoured, Sir," she replied with stiff civility, "by your condescension in accompanying her on her way; but," she added, turning to Gertrude, whose lovely cheeks wore a yet lovelier lustre in the blush that arose in them, "there are domestic duties at home that require our superintendence, so you and I will return to the house, if you please; besides, there may be some new guests in the way who may call for our attendance."

So curtseying stiffly to "the Colonel," with a look of cold respect and mingled dissatisfaction as regarded himself, and with an air of pride also at exercising her maternal authority as regarded the movements of her daughter, she proceeded, followed by Gertrude, in the direction of the hostelrie, leaving Renmore and Quandish together.

If Gertrude had heretofore viewed the countenance of the latter with tacit dread, she was now yet more sensible of this feeling, as she had encountered the malignant glance with which he met her; and since meeting which, she had turned her eyes studiously away from him, and kept them averted with loathing, during the above brief conference. A momentary silence had ensued between our hero and the preacher, which was broken by the former, as he proceeded with his accustomed art to direct the attention of his secretly dreaded foe to indifferent subjects on which he commenced conversing. This he did in order insensibly to lead Quandish away, if he could, from the topic which he was conscious, from the apprisal afforded him by Gertrude, was foremost in his mind—namely, that of his rejected suit, and his suspicions that he, Renmore, was a more favoured suitor.

"It is pleasant to have met again!" (said our hero, with well-assumed gaiety;) "such confidential friends may here enjoy a rencontre without much chance of interruption. By-the-bye, have you heard anything of our former acquaintance in Ireland? they were to be at the Kilkenny races next autumn, and good sport I am told is expected."

"Hatfield!" exclaimed Quandish, with a determined and ferocious look, as if to express that the artfulness of his companion in attempting to lead him away from the sore and suspected topic was of no avail. . . . "Hatfield!" . . .

"Why? what! my good Simmonds—I mean Quandish—what is the matter?" replied our hero, interrupting him with pretended surprise. "What can all this mean? I trust that no doubt has arisen in your mind that I shall not be true to my promise as to paying you the money in due time?"

"By heavens! if I had a doubt, it should go ill with you! and . . ."

"Why, you astonish me!" continued Renmore; we had settled everything most amicably, and I trust shall yet have more reason to be satisfied with our mutual negotiation than hitherto. Come, let us talk on more indifferent topics."

"No!" exclaimed Quandish, stamping with his foot on the ground, in increased passion. "Think not to trifle with and make a jest of me!"

" A jest of you?"

"Yes! a jest of me!—Are you not opposing, thwarting me, laughing at me, in my most earnest object?"

"What can you possibly mean?" inquired Renmore, with a continued look of well-feigned surprise.

"How can you ask me? when you know that you are my rival, my successful—my secretly favoured rival,—in the attainment of this Gertrude Wetherby's hand—for I am confident this is the case! Yes, you—you—have baffled me in this suit, in which her mother befriended me, and which would, were I successful, place me beyond the reach of want, danger, and living by expedients; . . . and which," he continued, choked with passion, "if it had not been for you—seeing the girl has no inclination for any one besides—that I know of——"

... "What is the meaning of all this?" inquired Renmore, still pretending the most utter amazement, while Quandish paused and panted for breath, such was the height of passion in which he had spoken. "You astonish me! you have, I am sure, my good-wishes in any such suit as you mention."

" Away with your acting, and your attempt to hide the truth! I know too well to whom I am indebted for this frustration of my views. You cannot deceive or cajole me, though you have deceived the greater part of mankind you ever dealt with. But mark my words, for this is the only revenge I can take . . . if the money is not ready to a day-that moment shall you be delivered up to the fate which hangs over you, and which it is in my power to hasten or withhold! I care not what retaliation or exposure you may make as regards me; and I should only care about them at this moment, inasmuch as they would ruin my object as regards this suit,-they would spoil my plan with this widow Wetherby. Otherwise, I care not for them; for as long as I betray you, my life is at any rate insured me. So beware of my revenge! And I almost hope you may fail in your payment, that I may put it in force."

"Why! what great mistake has a little jealous feeling made you guilty of?"

"Away! take off your hand!" exclaimed Quandish, as Renmore retained him, as the former was about to leave the spot, after uttering the menace we have just heard.

"Well!" continued Renmore, "if words are of no avail,—if you really cannot be made to credit what I say,—if you persist in letting your passion so far get the better of your reason as to pronounce me the rival of your affections or plans, or both, without any proof . . ."

"What stronger or more convincing proof do I require than witnessing that girl in your company? when it is notorious she has avoided, refused, and scorned the addresses of every one else?"

"Pshaw! my good friend, be reasonable. I have indeed fallen in her way by chance, on one or two occasions, but what of that? Really, you surprise me! and to any other person than yourself I should not think it worth my while to enter into explanations as to my conduct, which he would have no right to demand—nor I to afford!"...

"Very well, very well! oppose me if you dare!"

"Nay, nay," said Renmore, coolly, but firmly; if it was my inclination to oppose a man, not even would I flinch from doing so, though it were the man himself in whose hands my life was placed! But no," he continued, resuming his former

tone of cheerfulness and kindly confidence; "opposition is not my object. I would rather conciliate you, and prove to you, by arguments the most satisfactory, that it is far from my wishes or intentions to frustrate your plans, or stand in your way."——

"What proof can you give?"

"What better than removing from the spot? from the sphere of attraction, eh?—from this syren, eh?" he asked, jocularly, as he laughed, while the sullen features of Quandish relaxed somewhat from their more rancorous expression—when suddenly recollecting himself, he said, hastily—

"But how do I know what your object in removing from the spot may be?—to escape my observation?"—

——"To put the money due in your pocket by the appointed time, man!"... said Renmore, interrupting him, and speaking in an assured, impressive tone, while he looked with an expression of mingled resolution and authority in his face—

"And what is more," he continued, "to pay my addresses in another, though less inviting quarter! Do not ask me where; that you shall perhaps one day know. Suffice it for you, at present, to be convinced of the injustice of your accusation, as regards me, in thwarting your views. . . . I go!—

to-morrow's sun will see my departure, and leave the coast clear for you."

So saying, Renmore took the hand of the ruffian he had been endeavouring to appease, as he wished him "good-bye," and proceeded back to the Traveller's Rest, not desirous of protracting the parley with one he detested and despised, yet was obliged to dread. Quandish screwed the muscles of his loathsome face into a grin of assent, that he was satisfied with the avowal of our hero, while he neither withheld nor advanced the hand which Renmore had taken to shake in pledge of amity, and of assurance that good faith should be observed in the promises he had made to appease his rival.

Quandish's smile, if it may be so called, belied itself in the faintness of its expression, save in that characteristic of mistrust which it sufficiently bespoke; and returning the parting salutation of "good-bye" by a sort of half-growl, half-ejaculation, intended to convey the same meaning, he went his way to the village, while Renmore returned to the Traveller's Rest. As he went, he thought to himself, with reference to what he said to Quandish, "Ay, the coast indeed may be clear for you,—but, fool! think you, the heart or mind of Gertrude could ever be swayed to accede to the vows of such a thing—such an object for loathing

and scorn as thou art? Were she not mine, yet it is not on thee she would ever throw herself away."

With these thoughts passing in his breast, he regained the hostelrie; nor did they occupy him without also recalling to mind the augury of old Mike, as regarded the increased probability of danger that would be entailed on himself, as soon as the pseudo-preacher should discover that he stood in his way as regarded his views concerning Gertrude. The augury was indeed fully fulfilled; and though the storm might appear for the present allayed, its menace still darkened the atmosphere of our hero's day.

CHAPTER VI.

"Man does not know
What a cold faintness made her blood run back."
Souther.

Renmore's first consideration now, was to secure the sum which was to be paid by him as the redemption of his life. The remainder of the day subsequently to his interview with his enemy had been spent in preparation for his departure, which, independently of his plans of moving as stated to Quandish, he had been requested to resolve upon by his demure hostess, with all the stiff civility of which she was mistress. He had purposely passed up and down stairs repeatedly, from the sitting room he occupied to his room above stairs, in the hope of crossing Gertrude, but in vain. She was nowhere to be seen. Not the least anxious portion of the disquiet he suffered was that which was occasioned by his wish to see her, and conclude the

arrangement for meeting her, with a view to proceeding to Lorton for the purpose of their union. Often did he hurry to the window as he heard a step without; often, as he heard some one move along the passage into which his door opened, did he hasten to see if it was herself. He was, however, as constantly disappointed.

The blind of the window was drawn completely over the sash, against which the mellow flush of the sunset rays now streamed. It was usually his joy to contemplate those setting rays, with associations of the glory and repose at once, which they lit up in the mind; but now they were perfectly excluded, as though he shunned their light, that seemed to search him out—as though in detection of some deed of secrecy and danger in which he was engaged.

Far other sensations than those of the happy associations just mentioned seemed to possess him, to mark the serious and careful expression on his countenance, as he bent over the papers, at the table where he was engaged in writing. He seemed to scrutinize every stroke of his pen, with the curious eye of a limner, that examines the effect of his performance during the different stages of its progress.

Thus busily was he engaged when, as though a vision had awakened him, the form of Gertrude herself stood by his side. Notwithstanding all his address and presence of mind, he was unable to maintain his composure, as he started at her unexpected, and yet more, her unaccountable appearance; for the door that led into the passage had been carefully secured by him, previously to his sitting down to write. She had, in fact, gained access by a door on the opposite side, which opened from another room, and which had escaped his notice, from the circumstance of its being papered over, to resemble the wall of which it appeared to form a part.

So softly had she entered and stolen to his side that, absorbed as he was in his occupation. he had not perceived her, till she gleamed, thus vision-like, by his side. She started, however, no less than himself, when she perceived the confusion her sudden presence appeared to occasion him, and the involuntary change that came over his countenance. The confidence with which he had ever felt, as regarded her, from the time their acquaintance had strengthened, had indeed occasioned him to wear far less disguise, and veil his thoughts much less in the happy, the dear security of her presence, than before any one else; and often had she looked on him with a feeling of surprise, not altogether unmixed with a whispering of fear, she knew not why, as she silently contemplated his moods of abstraction, in which occasional expressions of pain would find utterance. But (as, indeed, has been heretofore witnessed) if the tear stole into her eye, as she would ask, "Are you not well?" her sense of alarm or doubt was speedily banished, on recognising his return to that easy cheerfulness and graceful vivacity which characterized his ordinary manner.

There is no eye so keen as that of a person who loves. From the first moment Gertrude had known him, she had detected the traces of some latent sore,—else why his thoughtfulness—why his study of privacy and distaste of society? But these questions of her heart were but rendered instrumental by him towards increasing her growing attachment to him; for he had but to confess to her that there were feelings that gave him pain,—regrets for those he had lost—the friends of past days,—and the tenderness, the interest, with which she repaid him for his confidence—what was it but love?

It is true, that in her solitary moments, and when her thoughts recurred, as they ever did, to one who had won such a control over her affections, she would marvel at the cameleon-like character of the singular being she thought upon—at once so retired, yet so socially cheerful when occasion required, so changeable ever, from the deepest emotion to the gayest indifference,—from the shadow of sadness and thoughtfulness to that of the liveliest—the most careless yet graceful unconstraint! The riddle of such a character, if it, at times, held her

fixed and musing on it, found most willingly a solution of its inconsistency in the thought that the best, the noblest, the gayest, the most generous spirits, are yet sullied at times, and overcast by regrets, such as those he had acknowledged to her, and which render them scarcely themselves. But never had she felt that sense of surprise, not unmingled with fear, so strongly as on the present occasion, when she regarded the look of wildness, and observed the unusual hurry of manner, that the suddenness of her unexpected entry prevented him from so immediately subduing as might have been expedient.

As Renmore started up from his seat, his hand shook so that the letter he was forming at the moment was distorted into a hieroglyphic that would have puzzled Champollion himself to decypher. By a certain instinctive boding of evil, Gertrude's eye glanced at once on the disfigured paper, which Renmore did not attempt to conceal, for in doing so he would have been exciting the very suspicion which, it was possible, he apprehended. He, however, caught up his handkerchief, which was lying by his side on the table, and lifting it hastily to his face as if to use it, let it drop instantaneously, intending that it should fall and hide the paper. Unfortunately, however, the draught of air occasioned by snatching up the

handkerchief blew the paper on the floor, and it alighted at Gertrude's feet. He hastened now to pick it up, while he addressed her—

"Ah! Gertrude, is it you, my dearest? what agitation does your sudden presence occasion me! I have been endeavouring throughout the day, and ever since I came in, to catch a glimpse of you, but in vain. How your sudden presence surprises me! Oh! the happiness at seeing you!"

While he thus spoke, he flung the paper, which he had by this time picked up, into the fire, where it blazed away till its burnt and flimsy skeleton winged its way in black flakes up the chimney. Renmore's eye watched it and fixed itself on Gertrude's face by turns, for her glance was directed to it with a look of curiosity and apparent pain, to judge by the paleness of her cheek, as something whispered to her that the secret which had expired with that paper was, also, one and the same with that of her lover's agitation on her sudden entrance.

"I have with difficulty snatched an opportunity of eluding the vigilance exercised over my movements, in order to see you once again before your departure, and conclude what we were interrupted in saying—to—"

Here the tears that agitation and alarm occasioned, checked her utterance, as she hid her head in Renmore's bosom, who now clasped her to his heart—inquiring anxiously, what was the matter? what was the cause of her disquiet?

"Had I known you had been so earnestly engaged, I should not have intruded on you."

"Intrude on me, Gertrude?—intrude on me? I had been praying, only a moment past, for your presence, and you blessed me by affording it!"

"But why that agitation?—that alarm which it seemed you evinced on my coming in? What was there in that paper that I thought you seemed so desirous to hide? Dear, dear Sir! if you love me with the sincerity you have declared, rid me of the painful anxiety I have been occasioned, in seeing you exhibit yourself on the present occasion so different from that which you have usually appeared."

Renmore suspected that Gertrude's uneasiness arose from her having seen what it was he had been engaged in describing on the paper. Her glance having instantly alighted on it as it fell at her feet, she had perfect time to see its contents. In a word, it was a leaf of a "cheque book," in which the name, not of "Renmore," but of "Lawton," was traced, and the ink being as yet wet, the natural inquiry which would suggest itself was—
"What right had the hand that traced it to do

so?" What was more, the writing of the name was a perfect imitation, an exact fac-simile, of the squire of Blacktarn's hand of writ!

"My darling Gertrude, you surprise me!" he replied to her, with his usual calmness and composure, which he had now perfectly regained. "What should possibly have suggested to your mind that there was any evil in that paper? or, that it was connected with my very reasonable surprise at witnessing you when I had so little expected to see you? If I appeared agitated, how could I well be otherwise, loving you as I do?holding conflict as I do with the painful necessity of quitting the walls that contain you, and where alone I have of late learned to know what happiness is? . . . As for the paper which you saw, and which I am sorry now I burned-it was a mere trifle. However, I did it in my hurry, my eagerness to fling aside all other subjects that occupied me, when that dearest one of yourself was presented me. As for that paper, it certainly was written in some degree of hesitation of mind and uneasiness. In fact, I had been invited to Blacktarn, to Mr. Lawton's; but such was my distress of mind at the circumstances that have separated me, for the present moment, from yourself, that feeling little inclination to see any society, I was sitting, hesitating whether I should not refuse going; for

heaven knows, it will be a penance to me when I feel I leave you behind; and so I sat scribbling, scarcely knowing what I did, the name, 'Lawton, Lawton, Lawton,' in my abstraction, and on your entering the room, I was scared as though roused suddenly from some dream. I never heard you enter . . . and have you come at last, only to upbraid me?"

And before Gertrude could reply, he sealed their conciliation, if it may so be called, which his words had wrought, by kissing away the tear that had stolen into her eyes, emboldened as he was by the more cheerful and composed aspect which her countenance had gradually assumed as he spoke.

In fact, though there was much of plausibility in what he had said to pacify her, yet there was also no small degree of truth. Loving her as he did, he might well have exhibited the agitation she witnessed in him; and, as we all know how, in a fit of abstraction, both the mind and the pen may wander without any definite object, it was perfectly reasonable he should have inadvertently penned the good squire of Blacktarn's name twice or thrice over, as he was doubting in his own mind whether he should write to decline his invitation or not. The paper Gertrude had seen fully bore out the explanation her lover had given, since the name of Lawton was repeated two or three times on it; and if the reader should be more inclined to consider that this circumstance denotes the character of "counterfeit," we can only say that it must, at any rate, have been a mere primary essay for a future and more finished effort. But, supposing there was anything that suggested to Gertrude in particular, no less than the reader, the idea of the writing in question being a counterfeit, what could this circumstance be?—we shall hear from herself.

The smile of renewed confidence which now played on Gertrude's lip delighted Renmore, as again he pressed her hand, and clasped her to his heart, as she replied, shewing him a note she had received not long before she had sought this interview with him—

"Judge," she said, "if I had not reason for being alarmed at every writing I saw that was more equivocal or suspicious than that on a direction-post, or the dial yonder in the garden that tells us 'Time flies,' or, 'On this moment hangs eternity!' Look at this note and judge."

So saying, she put in Renmore's hand a scroll more like the vulgar account of some petty chapman than anything else, soiled and wafered as it was. Its contents ran thus:—

"Those we place most confidence in are sometimes the most worthy of our distrust. Should you hereafter have cause to repent an irremediable disaster as the consequence of your present misplaced affection, remember, you were warned in time. Beware of an impostor and a criminal."

"Umph! what, no name to this portentous piece of 'warning!' observed Renmore, as he finished reading it, which he had done throughout in a careless and contemptuous tone. "Well! no doubt this is 'kindly meant,' and is, assuredly, directed against your admirer," continued Renmore, artfully turning away from himself the possible application of the note—"Quandish, the Buttermere saint! We are always bound to be thankful for good intentions and kindly offered advice, but it is a pity the writer is a little late in his admonition, for we had already anticipated him in being on our guard; for I told you I had heard, generally, that this Quandish was no saint after all!"

"But was not the note enough to alarm me?" interposed Gertrude—" enough to alarm any one? —no name!—such mystery!"

"I know it would have alarmed me," replied Renmore, smiling, as he appeared to amuse himself with tearing the scrawl into pieces and throwing it into the fire. "Now, I am sure I can have as little respect for this 'wolf in sheep's clothing,' this Quandish, as any one can have; but, mark me, Gertrude! I am not the person to indite an anonymous note to do him injury!"

And here, as usual, the generosity of the sentiments he expressed, together with that dignified and calm impressiveness of manner, he knew so well how to assume, at once overawed and convinced her that if distrust and disquiet had been awakened in her mind, it was not to be entertained in connexion with anything that concerned her lover. Meantime, he continued-" Now, I am not surprised that, so universally beloved as you are, there are those who -not perhaps knowing that you have a sufficient guardian over your interests in either Mr. Fenton or myself-have written this to place you on your guard against this designing person who aspires to your hand. I am not surprised, I repeat, at this. And, if I pleased, I might, of all men, say much more, as I have already hinted, to his disparagement. But this I am above doing. I am satisfied you are sufficiently alive to the guile of his character to require no other warnings."

" Assuredly, none!" exclaimed Gertrude, earnestly.

"But this much I may be permitted to impart to you—that to myself he has been guilty of the blackest ingratitude, and hence (such is the baseness of human nature) is my worst enemy."

" Is it possible?" said Gertrude, indignantly.

"It is indeed but too certain; yet, after all, it is but an exemplification of the baseness of

the human character, an examination of which teaches us (I am sorry to say) that we have only to place a man under an obligation, to make him at once a secret enemy; and yet more, whenever an opportunity offers itself—an avowed one."

Here Renmore's tone became impassioned, as he seemed animated by a virtuous indignation, while he continued, "Yes, and if it were possible for this Quandish to do me any mischief by traducing me, he would do so!"

" Traduce you?"

"Yes; for the very reason I compassioned and befriended him when others might have crushed him for his delinquency. Therefore, dear love, mark me—when I am out of the way, heed not whatever this low being's tongue of gall may say to asperse me. Had he been a more worthy object of my indignation, he should have met it. As it is, I despise him, as I trust you will."

"You need not indeed ask me! But hark, there is some one in the next room, from which I came into yours!—it is my mother—I have not a moment to lose—say when——"

"I will return here to you as speedily as possible; to a day exactly, I cannot positively say; but hasten to Lorton, by all means, if you find any additional constraint imposed on you here. But transmit me a note, first of all, to Blacktarn,

(where I shall in all probability be,) to state the period when you purpose throwing yourself on Mr. Fenton's protection. I will hasten thither to join you—to claim you,—and yet I—I fear that . . ."

"Why do you hesitate?" asked Gertrude, as she looked inquiringly in his face, with lips apart and with flushed cheek, bespeaking the earnestness of her interest.

"I know not why, but I would rather we were united by any one but Mr. Fenton."

" Heavens! why?"

"You have witnessed, ere now, my agitation as his name was mentioned. In fact, though he does not know me, he knew something of my parents-of my early history; and upon explaining this, there may be some pain occasioned. I need not, indeed, recall to you that you have witnessed the pain which some such considerations have already awakened." And then, recovering himself, he said more calmly, " But no; this is mere selfishness in me, to shrink from any disclosure of this kind; besides, I may defer it to a future opportunity, and after our union. Yes, yes; it shall be so-it must be so! It is agreed, then, we meet at Lorton, if you are forced to quit your home. If not, I will come back here to you; . . . but you will write. . . . Farewell !"

Scarcely had Gertrude time to answer back the word of parting, as he snatched her eagerly to his heart and pressed his lips to hers,—where soul met soul at the lips as truly as heart beat against heart—when the voice of Mrs. Wetherby was heard without, requesting admittance. Renmore delayed not to gratify her request, when she entered, and looking round the room, with an inquiry purporting that she fancied her daughter's voice had been overheard by her, she left it again on finding the object of her search was not there. Gertrude had escaped by the opposite door.

Renmore, left to himself again, turned once more (after having locked both the doors of his room) to his "literary" occupations, satisfied with the explanation he had given Gertrude, and above all, satisfied with having, as he doubted not, placed her effectually on her guard against any criminations that the exasperation or malice of his enemy might urge him to utter against him during his absence, with a view to rendering him an object of her alarm and suspicion. That such would be the case he augured, since he had no doubt that the writer of the anonymous epistle in his disfavour was Quandish. Meantime, ere we leave him to his "literary lucubration," it should be observed that the very card which bore his "worthy friend" Lawton's "autograph" was now placed on the

before him; if he had, as he has just been I to mention, any hesitation as to whether he id visit Blacktarn or not, we may here state his hesitation was now at an end. Being rbed, as our "Colonel" was, in his quarters at ermere, the course of his campaign was at once mined to be in the direction of Blacktarn, her he was under an engagement to go, and e, no doubt, he was by this time eagerly exel.

CHAPTER VII.

" Hope and peace
On all who heard him did abide;
The subtle witchcraft of his tongue
Unlock'd their hearts."

SHELLEY.

The period of our hero's visit to Blacktarn was looked forward to with no common interest, both by the fair mistress of Blacktarn and her sagacious sire; though the causes of their interest might not have been altogether the same. Mr. Lawton, from the first period of his acquaintance with his expected guest, had never sallied forth on any adventure of improvement without wishing Colonel Renmore could but see it!

"For once," he would exclaim, with amusing self-complacency, "I have come in contact with a sensible, unprejudiced person, who exhibits no petty jealousy as to the merits of another man's inventions and improvements, to gratify which, a system of mean, unworthy detraction is pursued—ahem !—
yes; there are some I could name to whom I can
never shew any single experiment I am proceeding
with, but they must needs find some fault—suggest
some difficulty—some obstacle to the chance of
its success. Pshaw! I despise such spirits. All
this is jealousy,—sheer envy at being outstripped
in the exalted race of extending the range of
'scientific invention,' offering new and improved
methods for facilitating agricultural and mechanical
operations, and, in fact, being benefactors to our
country."

Thus soothed by the flattering unction which self-complacency laid to his soul, the worthy Mr. Lawton piqued himself no less on his sagacity in experiment and invention, than on the exaltedness of his character as being of public benefit to mankind. A great man was he in his own eyes; and piqued, as he justly felt himself to be, with those objections to his plans which others exhibited, (and which he imputed with natural and pardonable vanity to jealousy,) he was delighted with the generosity, above all other traits, which he had discovered in our hero, who could afford to listen to the arduous achievements of another, without feeling the malignant influence of sordid envy.

Colonel Renmore, then, was no less an object of admiration to the sire for his magnanimity and candour, than he was to the fair Laura for his gallantry, engaging manner, and accomplishments. In fact, she might well esteem every one else as insipid in comparison with him, considering the little she had as yet seen of the world and society, and so alive, consequently, as she was to any impression,—being, as yet, but as wax, new and soft for the reception of the stamp that should shape or mark it.—She was, on the present occasion, seated at the instrument, while Mr. Lawton was occupied in conning a large "scroll," or "roll" rather, of paper, purporting to be no less portentous a document than a "plan" for the improvement of the Blacktarn manor. At length, he threw it down on the table, as he turned to his daughter—

"Come, come, my dear, play something else let us have a little variety—that is a charming thing, no doubt, which you played in accompaniment with Colonel Renmore the other night, but you have been playing scarcely anything else since."

"Indeed, papa! I was not aware I had played it so often; but—but," replied Laura, smiling, while the blush rose in her cheek—

"But—but," interposed Mr. Lawton, smiling in turn, "to whatever strain the heart—eh?—is turned, to that it recurs involuntarily, and with unchanging pleasure—eh?—umph!"

" My dear papa, how can you think of such a

thing?" replied Laura, as the blush wore a yet heightened crimson over her fair forehead and face.

- "Well, well," continued Mr. Lawton, half playfully, half seriously,—expressing himself in his usually important manner, however. . . . "Well, well, child, more improbable things have happened—ahem!—than—no! I wont say what. . . . However, thus much I will say—ahem!—that the Colonel is a person of high qualifications; ya-as much so as"
- "My dear papa!" interposed Laura, still crimsoned over with blushes, and laughing at her father's banter, as she was willing to treat it, though she perhaps might tacitly own it would not displease her were its application true.
- "As much so," continued Mr. Lawton, "as of high pretensions; and—ahem!—I do not wonder at his having made himself acceptable (as I suspect) to a certain young lady not a hundred miles from Blacktarn."
 - " How ridiculous! my dear papa."
- "For—ahem!—he, no doubt, paid her no inconsiderable attentions; and should they be ahem!—increased, why . . ."
- "How can you continue to tease me so," said Laura, laughing, as she declared she could not understand to what her father was alluding, while he

spoke thus; and so saying, she rose from the instrument, and taking up the portentous sheet, or roll, of improvements of the Blacktarn manor, asked what was being proceeded with on the present day. This suggestion recalled Mr. Lawton to his favourite topic.

"Ah! you remind me well, child. We will go out together and see how the ilex trees thrive that I had transplanted the other day to fill up the vacant spot in the lawn. Come, put on your bonnet, and join me on the lawn."

So saying, Mr. Lawton sallied forth to witness the condition of the ornamental trees in question, leaving Laura to follow him, which she shortly after did, as he stood contemplating the trees on the lawn, while he exclaimed in a tone of self-complacent triumph—

"There! I was told when I entered on the experiment of transplanting these trees, that their growth was too advanced* to admit of any hope of their surviving the attempt. . . . Pooh! it was to prove this, as well as to fill up the gap in the lawn, that the experiment was made."

The horticultural reader will remember with interest Sir H. Stewart's similar experiment. (See Blackwood's Mag., 1829.) The trees transplanted were of twenty-five years' growth and upwards; but, in such an experiment, more caution and management are requisite than belong to the character of our too sanguine and self-complacent "conjuror of Blacktarn."

[The trees, we should observe with a " Nota Bene," were of thirty years' growth.]

"Certainly, papa; but don't you consider that the leaves begin to look a little sear and foxy?"

"Pooh! pooh! not a jot, not a jot;—just at first, perhaps, they may look a little less lively; but it was mere jealousy that dictated the suggestion of certain persons to whom I mentioned the experiment."

" What was that ?"

"Why, that I was merely digging holes in the best piece of turf I had about the grounds, instead of 'transplanting.'"

"But then the frosts, papa—how will they bear the frosts? For I am told that trees, advanced in growth so much as these, are rarely to be moved from their original site with any chance of success."

"My dear child, you know little about these matters. The frosts, indeed! I know well that this objection has been made. I have known a whole grove of laurels, ay, more than enough to decorate the brows of the whole conclave of our 'genii of the lake'—I say, I have known it all destroyed by the frosts in one night. This is true; (ahem!) but it is an evil these ilex trees might have suffered in their original position, and does not follow as a necessary consequence on their present one. Pshaw! I hate such trumpery objec-

tions. I wish Colonel Renmore were here. I am sure he would join with me in considering-"

"Why, papa, who is this riding up the park?" interposed Laura, as her attention was now occupied by the circumstance of which she had just apprised Mr. Lawton, who, turning his eyes away from the ilex trees to the equestrian stranger in the park, exclaimed—

"Why, bless me, how singular! it is the very person I was wishing were here. It is Colonel Renmore himself!"

So saying, Mr. Lawton and his daughter proceeded in the direction of the house, towards the portico of which our hero was now nearer and nearer approaching, followed by a groom he had newly taken into his service. Nor was it long before he alighted, as the groom had now ridden up, and by the awkward mode in which he touched his hat. and even "made a leg," as he drew his foot back from the stirrup, plainly shewed that he was some "Johnny Raw" of the neighbourhood whom the Colonel had kindly taken into his service. He had taken him, in fact, as a sort of "valet-de-place" on the occasion of his visit to Blacktarn, being the best that offered; and not a little amused was Mr. Lawton to recognise, though it was with some difficulty, the waggish physiognomy and carroty locks of honest Jock, the Buttermere carrier, who having been out of work, was glad to accept Renmore's proposal of accompanying him as groom, and accordingly doffed his smock-frock, and donned a spruce livery, with cockade, top-boots, &c. The worthy squire could not refrain (after having greeted the "master") from uttering a word of recognition to the "man," who was well known throughout the neighbourhood.

"Why, Jock, so you are promoted," he said;
"I'm glad to see it."

"Promoted, Sir! what's that?" asked the new groom.

"Why, 'lifted up,' Jock !"

"Well, so it is now," replied Jock; "for I am lifted up from the ground to the saddle! and, I take it, I've got the 'saddle on the right horse,' in the Colonel's service. From 'carrying,' I am now 'carried' myself," added our Touchstone.

"Active and passive moods both, then, are you perfect in, Jock!" said his master, good-humouredly; "so you will please now to exercise the first of these, in 'carrying' off the horses to the stable, while I join Mr. Lawton."

Jock touched his hat, and did as he was bid; while Mr. Lawton, now extending his hand to our hero, again expressed his pleasure at seeing him.

"Laura and myself were but this moment past speaking of you, and wishing you were with us, that we might have the benefit of your good taste on the subject of a little 'experiment' that we are amusing ourselves with just at present."

Renmore smiled as he took off his hat and bowed to Miss Lawton, while he replied to the cordial greeting of his host by expressing how happy he was to have come in upon them at so interesting a juncture.

The whole party immediately proceeded towards the lawn, as our hero declined the offer of entering the house and taking refreshment, which was suggested by his careful host with his usual goodhumoured hospitality.

"Well, then, we will look round the grounds."

Of course the first object of inspection offered their "distinguished guest" was that of the ilex trees; and when the "slight objection" relative to their fate from the frosts was uttered contemptuously by the sanguine experimentalist, our hero's well-bred forbearance perfectly understood how to humour his good host's weakness, as he observed, in a strain of equal contempt—

"Really, if we were to regard everything we undertook in this frosty way, the stream of improvement would run faint and flagging indeed—nay, would be quite stagnant!"

"To be sure! Well said!—good!—cleverly illustrated!" exclaimed the Blacktarn conjuror, in high exultation. . . . " And is not the lawn improved by them?" he continued, looking round.

"The place is worth infinitely more, from the ornament they afford," replied Renmore, apparently no less gratified than the scientific gentleman who planted them.

"Worth hundreds more!" continued Lawton, taking up the words of his guest; "and yet I was told I was but 'wasting time in digging holes'—mark that—ay, 'digging holes'—in the lawn, and preparing logs for the fire!—ha, ha!"

"And I think you were told right," thought Renmore; while he composed his countenance, and sagely observed, "It would be well for these prognosticators of ill to wait until the evil arrives, before the utterance of their ill-natured outcry. Illluck always arrives too soon; and it is time enough for us to raise our voices when we meet it."

"Well said!—splendid!—now that is what I call philosophy!" said the exulting experimentalist, not overhearing the remark which, in a lowered tone, his guest addressed to his fair hostess, as he observed, in the course of the "by-play" of conversation which he had all this time been carrying on with herself—

"Not to mention that it is as well with a little foresight to prevent, if we can, the mischiefs that may happen; and with them the necessity of blaming our own folly or blindness, as it may be. Of course, I do not apply this remark to the present instance, but speak generally."

Laura smiled, as though a little sceptical as to the entire sincerity of this remark, though she was willing to acknowledge its politeness; and she now led the way down a wide gravel walk, forming a terrace, fenced on one side with a stately hedge of yew trees, quite according to the fashion of the true old English gardens. About the centre of this terrace, access was given to it by a spacious flight of turf steps, which commanded a noble and extensive prospect.

"Charming! delightful!" exclaimed Renmore, as he stood gazing on the wide maze of vale, and wood, and flood, spread as a map beneath him, far as eye could stretch. "You are beautifully situated here, Miss Lawton. I know no spot in the whole of what I have seen in this district more desirable than Blacktarn."

"I hope you will become better acquainted with it," said his hearty host, as Laura added—

"Indeed, I hope so, too. But do you descry," she continued, pointing out an object in the prospect, "that white 'speck' through the trees, on the other side the sheet of water, to the left?"

"Oh yes, perfectly; and if I mistake not, that must be our friend Miss Howbiggen's residence, at the further side of the lake of Buttermere." "I pointed it out," continued Laura, "for I was just going to inquire of you whether her invalid brother, Mr. Howbiggen, is better than he was the other day? You were going to stay a short time, were you not, at their house?"

"Indeed," replied Renmore, "they did me the honour to ask me there; but I could not hesitate for one moment which to prefer—the attractions of Blacktarn or Miss Howbiggen's—however sensible I might be of that lady's attention;" and here he bowed, while Laura smiled and coloured slightly in acknowledgment of the compliment, as Mr. Lawton interposed—

"And I hope, now you have come to see us, Colonel, you will not be in too great a hurry to run away from us. You will stay, of course, over the period of the boat-race?"

"I'm sure I shall be delighted to stay as long as I may be able," replied Renmore. "And when is the boat-race? I have not yet heard any tidings concerning it."

"Oh, quite a 'regatta' on lake Derwentwater! There is also to be a celebration on the principal island—a grand flower-show, previously to the race, and Laura, I hope, will send some specimens which will not be far from carrying off the prize. By-the-bye, you must shew Colonel Renmore the conservatory after dinner. When is the festival to be, my dear—on the 18th or 20th?"

"I think as late as the 20th, which is ten days hence."

"Oh, I hope certainly to prolong my stay in this neighbourhood," said Renmore, "until then;" and he was going here to make some remark complimentary on his fair hostess's taste for flowers, when Mr. Lawton interposed—

"What! only so short a time do you stay as ten days? Well, I trust that during that period (brief as it is) you will make Blacktarn your home. It will afford much pleasure to Laura and myself."

"Indeed, you honour me greatly," replied Renmore; "and I need scarcely say," he continued, addressing himself to Laura, "that if I am permitted by circumstances to remain here, I shall be delighted to do so. In fact, nothing but duties unavoidably requiring my absence would willingly take me away from a spot so delightful, and where I find attractions so great."

Laura coloured again, and hastily exchanged glances with her sire, whose portentous look (meant as it was to be significant) did not escape the notice of our hero, who could not but be sensible that he might very well feel himself perfectly "at home" with the good innocents, his host and youthful hostess, whose hearts and confidence he had so completely won.

"By-the-bye," said Mr. Lawton, as they turned

away from the view of Howbiggen's house, "do you remember the bet we had after dinner, Colonel? I mean on the evening we passed together at Howbiggen's."

"The bet?" replied Renmore, with pretended ignorance.

"Yes, to be sure,-about Hatfield."

"Oh!—that he would not counterfeit your handwriting. Oh, yes, I remember it now you mention it; but there is so little likelihood that we shall ever see the subject of the bet accomplished, that the circumstance had wholly escaped my memory."

"It would be impossible for him not to be detected. Anybody who has seen my handwriting knows it cannot be forged. My banker at Cockermouth would be able, for example, to tell at a glance whether the handwriting of the cheque offered them as mine were genuine or not."

"Your banker at Cockermouth!" thought Renmore to himself, as if this was a slight piece of information it was interesting to him to know; then he continued aloud, as he smiled and looked towards Laura—

"Oh, that fellow's address would be able to accomplish anything, if he had the opportunity. Why, for a bet, he would even have the audacity, not only to endeavour to counterfeit your autograph, but do anything yet more arduous—ay, run off with the heiress of Blacktarn herself!"

"Well, let me catch him achieving that, and he may claim five hundred pounds!"

"Thank you, papa, I'm much obliged to you," replied Laura, laughing; "I do not at all bargain for such a proof of either his audacity or adroitness as this. Yet I should like to see him very much. So clever a person and so accomplished (as I am told) may well be an object of curiosity. Is he handsome?"

"I really don't know," said Renmore; "and even if he were, I ought not to say so; for do you know," he continued, laughing as though relating a good joke, "I have been told I bear some resemblance to him!"

"Oh, then I am sure he" said Laurs, checking herself, as she coloured and laughed; while Mr. Lawton taking up her words, supplied them as he exclaimed—

"Is handsome! you were going to say, child. Well, so he is,—ha, ha! But only to think," he continued, as he laughed, "that the rogue should bear a resemblance to you, Colonel. Pooh, pooh! you may say so, but I have heard from those who have seen him, that he is shorter than you, and has different coloured hair."

"Nay," said Renmore, smiling, and continuing

the joke, "I might be highly flattered at having the likeness attributed to me. For my vanity, I am sure, would be gratified to its fullest extent, since I should be an object of curiosity to thousands who would stand on tip-toe to catch a glimpse of me."

"Good, good!—true, true!" replied Mr. Lawton, winding up the whole with his fiat of approbation, while the trio had now returned to the portico of the house, the period of dinner being fast approaching. Laura now took her leave, for a time, of her guest, who was shewn to the room appropriated to his use; and the toilette having occupied the important interval of the next half-hour, the party met again, and Colonel Renmore had soon the honour of handing the heiress of Blacktarn into the dining-room.

Mr. Lawton's table exhibited everything that an old English country gentleman's hospitality could afford. Venison that had run in his own park, pike that had darted in his own pools, leveret and moor-poult; and as to the last, it may be observed that the year was not advanced enough to afford a specimen of the bird in its more matured growth and flavour. In fact, Mr. Lawton had an honest pride in having everything he possibly could for the purposes of life from his own domain; and those who were willing to "quiz" him for his "scientific manageuvres" could not do so otherwise

than good-humouredly; for they had only to enter his doors to discover his thorough goodness of heart, and pleasure in exercising the rites of hospitality. His pride on this score was not less than on the subject of his supremacy as an experimental philosopher, and even those who were most ready to satirize him, soon put an extinguisher on their more caustic propensities when the steam of the Blacktarn venison, the "fine bitter" of the moor-fowl from the Blacktarn glens and heath-crags, regaled them. "What can equal our good friend Lawton's 'deserts,' except his-dinners!" would Dr. Esdaile exclaim in the true spirit of that epicurism for which he was distinguished. And, indeed, though the "bon-vivant" Doctor used to make merry at the expense of his friend Lawton, he no less entertained a considerable degree of esteem for him, and respect too, as regarded the better and more generous qualities he possessed.

But dinner being over, and Laura having now retired from the table where she had presided with so much grace, Colonel Renmore was left alone with his host and the claret. But their libations were not very protracted, exhibiting a worthy breach of the Silenian observance of the time, which was an age of "toping" after dinner.

On Renmore's entrance into the drawing-room, he was struck with the antique beauty of its style and fashion. The furniture was all massive and profusely gilded; so were the borders of the window-frames, walls, and ceiling; the looking-glasses were in the Louis XIV. style, and the ceiling was vaulted, and painted with designs which bespoke more taste than he had ever dreamed of discovering amongst the devious wilds of Blacktarn. But these decorations were executed under the supervision of the grand-father of the present proprietor; which last person, if he was unable duly to appreciate them for their intrinsic merit, certainly held them in high esteem as far as their character of family memorial was concerned.

The eye was very agreeably met by a large glass door at the end of the room, exhibiting, in a conservatory within, a beautiful assortment of exotics; while hues of all varieties, and blossoms of all odours, joined their combined tribute of beauty and fragrance to gratify both sight and smell on entering it.

"A perfect paradise this, indeed!" said Renmore, as he walked round it, escorted by Laura. "It is difficult to know on which side to turn first, so dazzled and delighted is the eye with all. You are skilled in the science of flowers, doubtless, Miss Lawton? At any rate, your taste for their varieties, both native and foreign, is, I can easily see, most eminent."

It is incumbent on us to mention here that

amongst the various accomplishments of this singular, nay, "gifted" person, Renmore or Hatfield,—botany was not amongst the least prominent. In answer to his observation, Mr. Lawton said—

"Yes; Laura amuses herself in this way now and then—nay, she is not an unworthy disciple of Linnæus, I can tell you, Colonel."

"Oh! really, papa, you give me credit for attributes more scientific than I deserve, or indeed desire; for," she added, smiling to Renmore, "my ambition does not reach so high as to style myself a 'botanist.' I am a very poor member of the blue-stocking sisterhood. The pleasure the flowers afford me in their variety, and the superior beauty with which they repay any additional care of them, is what chiefly interests me in them."

"And permit me to add," said Renmore, "that this is what is chiefly deserving, too, of your interest. Although I will not call botany altogether so petty or dry a study as many consider it, yet I think, in pursuing it, we often lose sight of that which constitutes the main charm of the lovely world of flowers. Their chief interest is, I think, in that language which the mind and feelings interpret in them; the gratitude, for instance, with which they seem to repay our care, and the joy they seem to testify under the beauty of the season that calls forth their bloom,"

"Yes, indeed, I think so," said Laura, while Mr. Lawton's assent expressed it in the more pompous exclamations, "Good! Ay, to be sure! Most assuredly!"

"Nay," continued Renmore, "I often, according to the idea just expressed, hold what I may call a sort of tacit commune with flowers—ay, as though a spirit dwelt in them, and spoke in them. Indeed, as to their mere vitality and formation, how much are they like the human frame? They languish as we do, and lose their radiant colours as we do our complexions, in confinement from the light. And then, look again at the curious and minute ramifications of veins through which their sap, the pale 'blood' of plants—passes."

"On-my-word-" exclaimed Mr. Lawton with oracular emphasis, now as much elevated by the subject as his guest and daughter could be"vastly interesting consideration!"

"Then," continued Renmore, directing Laura's attention to a splendid specimen of 'cactus,' which was on the stand close by them, "see the beauty with which the stem is finished and topped with the blossom. I think nothing speaks the wonder and 'fineness' (if I may use the expression) of the Creator's hand more than a flower. And as a specimen of his most 'cunning'

artifice, I look with reverence on flowers. Then their petals and chalices shrinking and expanding, as though asking dew or complaining of drought! They have a language,—they have a spirit and a meaning, (as you well said,) in them—which conveys a double interest when taken into consideration, beyond the charm of their mere fragrance or hue!"

"De—light—ful!— pic—to—ri—al!" exclaimed the Blacktarn philosopher, all open-eyed and open-mouthed at the illustration his guest was pursuing. Laura also felt it was deserving her interest no less than it claimed her concurrence, and seeing he hesitated in continuing, she said, "Nay; pray go on."

"It is this view, then, of the 'vegetable creation," he continued, "which exhibits the most eminent features of its claim to interest. The easterns have made flowers a pretty channel of interpretation to their thoughts, as emblems of feelings and sentiments."

"Yes," interposed Laura, with her usual justness of remark; "but this is of less interest. The making them reflect, or represent rather, feelings, is a secondary source of interest, and a feebler one than the language that exists in themselves!"

"No doubt! no doubt!" continued Renmore:

"but even this consideration of them is more interesting than when they are regarded as mere subjects for the dry pedantic 'analysis' of the botanist; for example, let us take the violet. Who would desire, pray, to enter on a technical analysis of its 'properties,' when its odour breathes of vernal sweetness and health, and its hues charm us not less than the eye of beauty itself?"

And here, as his glance met Laura's, and spoke its meaning that her own beauty might well be referred to, the blush rose on her cheek as he proceeded in a tone of warmth, kindled no less by the interest and charm of the subject itself than by witnessing that it was shared by those he addressed.

"It is the poetry—it is the sentiment—the mental luxury derived from such lovely objects, that more worthily attract us than any dry research as to their mechanism. This is to me like tearing their lovely coloured leaves to bits, and soiling them under foot! No, I am no 'botanist.'"

"Indeed, who could be, Colonel," said Mr. Lawton, "to hear you take such a much higher and worthier ground for the consideration of the subject! These are 'blooming' arguments, and of 'fine mould,'—'haw—haw—haw!"

And here the worthy Lawton with due self-complacence laughed solemnly at the happiness of the "hit" he had made, while he now led the way from the conservatory back again to the drawing-room, observing, "Really it is odd to me, since flowers have so much 'metaphysical' and 'poetical' charm about them, that the world of science should have busied itself so dryly on so fair a subject."

"That is just what Milton says of philosophy!" observed Renmore, smiling; while Lawton continued—

"Nay; Linnæus (ah—em!) goes so far, I am told, as to enter into the 'family'—the domestic history of his 'world of flowers!'—assures us they have their 'ladies and gentlemen' amongst them, and their marriages!"

"And happy weddings and sweet hymenæals must such lovers as these boast of, and celebrated amidst all the joy and glory of nature!" rejoined Renmore, smiling. "The idea is a pretty one, though I confess they all look so lovely alike, that, not wearing any wedding 'favours' to distinguish them, we should be in the dark as to which were the bride and which the bridegroom! Come," he added, 'as he sate down at a little writingtable of Miss Lawton's, as she had now repaired to the piano-forte—"here is a trifle expressive of our embarrassment on this pretty theme."

So saying, he took the piece of paper he had been writing the lines* on (for such they were) to the piano, and observing that he thought a particu-

Specimens of his composition were published in the periodicals of the time, both in verse and prose.

lar air Laura now proceeded to play would suit them, he sung the following:-

"THE LOVES OF THE ROSES.

- "Music, and Eloquence, and Love,
 In mystic accents warble still
 Nature's delight, around, above,
 In all her bloom, o'er vale and hill!
- "Soft o'er that Rose the breezes hush,

 To hear its sigh, they lull their own.

 What language kindles in that blush?—

 Love's music is the Rose's tone!
- "Say, gale! if, there, the Lover speaks,
 Blushing at his own raptured tale?
 Or lights that glow his mistress' cheeks?
 So like they blush! Interpret, gale!
- "Or thou, Night's bird! harmonious lover!"
 Thy rosy Beauty—which is she?
 Or on the bee's wing let me hover—
 For that sweet secret owns the bee!
- "And why? Because the rover knows
 That where his sweetest feast he sips,
 "Tis there, the Lady-flower blows,
 To woo him to her honey'd lips!
- "And ravish'd by thy perfum'd breath,

 Laura, thy charms, as roams he near,

 He'll deem thy honey'd lip the wreath

 His fav'rite blossom's beauties wear!"

^{*} Alluding to the old oriental fable of the nightingale making love to the rose. The fable here, however, proceeds to a further conclusion, and proves the bee the "best botanist!"

"Capitally turned!" exclaimed Mr. Lawton, who stood by the piano. "Positively the best discourse on botany I ever heard yet! By-the-bye, what do you think, Colonel?" he continued, lowering his tone to a graver key. "Fond as I am of all departments of science, I actually offered myself as leader of a horticultural society in the neighbourhood, promising to give a sort of 'discourse' on the subject on every anniversary meeting."

"Well; and were they not too ready to accept so handsome a proposal?"

"Not a bit of it; they chose some paltry botanical professor of a Scotchman, who only understood dry technical points, and ready 'cut and dried' rules, and had never like myself—(ahem!)—launched into the nobler fields of 'experiment'—the only sure test!"

"Disgusting! - ungracious!" exclaimed Renmore.

" Positive fact !" said Mr. Lawton.

"Mere jealousy!—rank envy!" rejoined Renmore. "But what says Pope?—

Envy will merit, like its shade, pursue,
But, like the shadow, proves the substance true."

"True, true!—no doubt of it!" replied the worthy experimentalist, with the amusing self-complacency which made him often ridiculous, but without which he would have been almost devoid of "character"—nothing.

- "Meantime," he continued, "mind, I did not answer their meanness by turning my back on them, but still patronize their society. And, in fact, it is their flower-show at which Laura is to exhibit."
- "You mean on the occasion of the 'regatta' on lake Derwentwater?" asked Renmore.
- "Yes, yes; on the 20th; child—didn't you say so?"
- "Yes, that is the day; but I fear my 'specimens' will hardly secure the prize."
 - " No doubt of it," exclaimed the sanguine sire.
- "I should think few lovelier flowers can be exhibited than those Blacktarn may boast!" said Renmore, bowing to Laura, who now retired, for it was growing late, for the night, blushing as she went, and not unworthily applying the compliment to her own charms.
- "Few lovelier, indeed," thought Renmore to himself, after she was gone, "except one;"—and that one—reader, it is needless for us to explain, (if we have already laid open to you his heart aright)—was Gertrude.

To her his thoughts "untravelled" recurred, when, having wished his host good-night, he was now left alone, and communing in the silence of his chamber with his own thoughts. He could not sufficiently deplore the dangerous circumstance of his enemy Quandish's having discovered the mutual attachment of himself and Gertrude. It may well be imagined,—whatever might be the endeavours on the part of his worthy host to render his visit at Blacktarn agreeable,—whatever charm, again, might be afforded to it by the society of one so fair and pleasing as Laura,—yet that the secret cause of his disquiet as regarded Gertrude must have been too strong and sincere to permit him to feel it so gratifying as it would otherwise have been.

It was long before he could close his lids in sleep, as he remained thinking how far she might be suffering vexation from the austere lecturings of her parent, in consequence of the discovery of her daughter's attachment towards himself; and he could only console himself by hoping that she would, whenever an opportunity was afforded her, repair to Lorton, and seek refuge with the good curate, where he hoped to join and make her his own.

More pleasing than those of her father's guest were the reflections of Laura. That they were bestowed on himself, and to his advantage, may readily be supposed, from the interest which he has been witnessed as already having awakened in her. Deservedly had that interest been strengthened by the increased experience which the preceding morning had afforded of his many engaging qualifications.

Such were the thoughts that made "the present" smile for Laura, which the fond dream of her heart whispered might possibly be the happy harbinger of a yet more radiant future.

Blind as we are !—How would Laura's radiant dream have been overcast could she but have known the secrets that possessed the heart of him to whom she felt her own thus tacitly inclining—could she but have known, too, how slender was the sway which the thought of herself maintained in it; but if, more than all, she had known that the object of her latent esteem was the "notorious Hatfield himself!"

But this consideration involves circumstances of pain to which the course of our story may possibly lead too soon. We would gladly shut our eyes, as yet, to those "shadows" which "coming events" already "cast before" them.

CHAPTER VIII.

"Could I behold thee in thy loftier mood,
Wandering at eve, with finely frenzied eye,
Beneath some vast old tempest-swinging wood!
Awhile with mute awe gazing I would brood,
Then weep aloud. . . ." COLERIDGE.

Morn smiled again on Blacktarn, and on Laura Lawton. The Arcadia of those russet slopes, those sunny glades, those sequestered haunts of wood and wave, all rejoicing in their golden summer glow, was not more joyous than the Arcadia of her own heart, which was now a bright world to her of sensations and prospects, all pleasurable as new. Life wore a novel aspect to her, under the various new impressions, springs of thought, feeling, and association, which the companionship and conversation of her father's guest unfolded to her. That confidence in him, which it was the dangerous quality of his easy ascendancy of mind and manner to win, became

strengthened hour by hour in the breast of Laura. The thoughts and feelings suggested by this or that remark or topic were uttered undisguisedly, and as to a monitor, to correct or approve, as it might be: and while she only considered or owned to herself that she admired, she in reality loved. She mentally leaned on him; and when the mind leans, the heart leans too.

While the father saw the progress of her acquaintance with pleasure, he felt that its increase or "improvement" (as he would say) was solely attributable to the natural undisguised qualities—the intrinsic distinction of manner and address in his guest,
which commanded interest. There was no effort to
"render himself agreeable;" no "advances" of any
kind. The most punctilious politeness and deference
were observed, in consistency with the most entire
familiarity, graced by intelligence and cheerfulness.

Such a manner would have disarmed all apprehension or vigilance on the part of a parent, since it was so entirely the opposite to design, even supposing such parent had wished to exercise vigilance. But on the contrary, in the present instance, Mr. Lawton was tacitly pleased to see Laura and the Colonel becoming every day better friends. And in fact, he felt now, at the conclusion of two or three days, that he was so well acquainted with his guest, such was the cheerful ease and frankness of his manner, that no closer bond, not even that of son-in-law, could make them better acquainted; for that such a contingency as the peculiar bond just surmised did suggest itself to the dreams of the worthy Lawton is quite certain. And very gratifying dreams were they; for not only was no man ever more "to his liking," as he would express it, than the Colonel, but there was no small distinction in having for a son-in-law "the Honourable Colonel Renmore, M.P., of Clan-renmore, County Caithness, &c."

Ah! indeed, the world of delusion is a happy one; but the worst of it is, it is so soon clouded, so soon, to use a favourite expression of the present day, "experiences a reaction."

With a young and sensitive spirit such as Laura's, it is more than probable that, passing her days for the first time in her life in companionship with a handsome and distinguished person such as Renmore, she would soon have been "over head and ears" in love; but the probability becomes yet more certain when his eminent qualifications of mind and manner are considered in addition. In fact, take any two people of opposite sexes, and of ages suitable to each other, and place them in each other's society, in a spot where few others interfere with them,—such as the Blacktarn fastness, or a country curacy, for example,—and so dependent

on each other will they become, that love and matrimony ensue almost as matters of course! Be warned, young curates, of this plain as awful truth, ere ye hurry into that "barathrum" of woe—an improvident marriage!

In the present instance, we cannot, then, be surprised at Laura's being sensible of the impression we have stated; and by this time (for Renmore's sojourn had now extended to some days) she was too conscious that the feeling which she had hitherto only been willing to recognise as esteem, interest, friendship, or admiration, claimed now a yet tenderer and stronger appellation. If, then, our hero is an involuntary accessory to the entertainment of such sentiments towards himself, let him not be blamed if any unhappiness should be the possible result.

No; if we have challenged for him the claim of possessing one attribute more redeeming than another in his character, it was that lofty feeling, that devotion which he evinced towards the one being who was in herself a world for him, which repaid him for the loss of a world whose good word he felt he had forfeited, whether from misfortune or guilty purpose we will not now stay to inquire. At present, it is but due to him to exhibit his consistency with that feeling which has here-tofore placed him before us in so redeeming a light.

In the teeth of danger, he has been seen lingering round the track of Gertrude. If "Circumstance" alone had whispered to him to make her his own, and secure her fortune—surely it now whispered that such an opportunity of benefiting himself was much more largely offered to him! No; much more than any dictates of interest were those of the passion which held him to Gertrude; or else there was little to prevent his securing the heiress of Blacktarn, and turning his back on all the professions he had made to the humbler, yet also lovelier maiden of Buttermere.

How easy would it have been for him to have engaged to himself the hand, no less than the heart, of the simple, unsuspecting, confiding Laura, and secured to himself the powerful aid and interest of her father to have covered his retreat abroad, for the sake of his child, whenever the fearful circumstance of her husband's identity should transpire. He might have secured her hand, and proceeded (on any plausible excuse) abroad at once, had he been so inclined,—had he not loved Gertrude too truly to be able so far to forget himself not less than her: Mike would have added, "had not it been 'his destiny' to do as he did."

What inducements, too, were there to his pride! The heiress of a country gentleman of good family was at his disposal! What associations, flattering to his self-love, were not offered, as he gazed on those venerable walls of the old mansion, with its twisted antique chimneys, and its embrowned hues—those glades where the hoar oaks and russet hawthorns spread—those ample domains around! To think that he could, with no effort at all, make them, and the fair claimant of them, all his own! Effort, say we? On the contrary, the heart and mind both of the sire and daughter, too simple, too plain, too confiding, to wear any disguise, were laid open before him, and invited him to make the advance.

Such thoughts, if possibly they passed across Renmore's mind, were but part of the "phantasmagoria" of those visions that float before the mind in its varied train of musings and associations; and all the dream vanished as the form of Gertrude called his heart to bow to it, and own that it was "all" for which he lived. And if Renmore had been a villain stigmatized by worse crimes even than those of which he was conscious, we should forget them when regarding him under the light of this one fairest trait!

But to place ourselves again with our hero by the side of Laura. All was sunny and lovely around her, and she walked in the light of joy and seeming security, along those sweet glades, buoyant in step and heart as the fawn that played across her woodland path, which recks not of the ambush of the "keeper" who is already levelling his rifle at her from behind the oak covert at the forest side.

There was a rude hut constructed of logs and trunks of wood, transverse and perpendicular; roofed, too, with masses of oak bark, and fitted with rustic seats placed in a circular form within. This rude edifice Laura and our hero had reached, as they wandered to enjoy the extreme variety and wild beauties of the scene that was spread out before them. The lovely haunt of Crummock water was visible from this part of the Blacktarn premises, and Laura smiled as she looked at it, with reminiscences of many a pleasant aquatic and fishing party that she had known on its fair flood.

"There is the little island at the further end where Dr. Esdaile, when he visits us, resorts to fish. See! you can discern his boat dancing about at the length of the chain that holds it to the rock-bank. He has often rowed me and papa to that island, to give us a display of his adroitness as a char-angler. We shall, shortly after the regatta on Derwentwater, have our friends from Keswick, Mr. Golefield, Routhmore, and Dr. Esdaile, all over at Blacktarn, I hope. And if you should be with us, we will hold a celebration on the island, that you may see what a charming spot it is to

pass an evening, when the sunset quite crimsons both wood and water!"

Just at this moment, some voices were heard of persons talking; and presently who should exhibit themselves climbing up the ascent by which the hut was gained, but Mr. Lawton, accompanied by the very persons whose names had just escaped the lips of Laura.

"Hoa! hoa! my sylvan goddess," exclaimed Mr. Lawton in his somewhat heavy playfulness; "you have made your temple here."

"Yes," interposed Golefield, "and not without a worshipper," as he looked towards our hero and smiled; while he added, as he turned to Routhmore, "Ah! then, the report must be true, after all."

"Indeed! yes," replied Routhmore; " and we must congratulate Colonel Renmore on the circumstance."

"Congratulate me!" exclaimed our hero in some surprise.

"Yes; congratulate you," said Golefield.

"Indeed!" replied Renmore; "I am not conscious of being so fortunate as to deserve congratulation on any subject that I am aware of, except generally the pleasurable sojourn I have been making these few days past"—(for a week had nearly slipped away)—" with my friends at Blacktarn and its vicinity."

"Indeed! when you say at Blacktarn, we may readily believe you," said Routhmore; "but for my part, though from a little modesty you may not avow it, yet I can assure you your happiness is no secret in the neighbourhood."

"My happiness?" exclaimed Renmore, laughing, and not understanding the drift of his friend's allusion, or whether he was only indulging in a little good-humoured pleasantry.

"Why, what?—eh?—what happiness?" asked Mr. Lawton, equally in the dark; while Laura also requested to be enlightened, as she joined with her father in saying they should both be happy to congratulate their guest, when they were made acquainted with the causes that deserved gratulation.

"Well, this is excellent!" exclaimed Golefield.

"Here we are at the 'fountain-head,' as one should suppose, whence this happy intelligence must have emanated, and lo! we find its stream either dry or dammed up."

"Pray be less enigmatical!" said Renmore; "and relieve myself, and Mr. and Miss Lawton, of our common ignorance on this happy piece of intelligence."

"Ah!" observed Routhmore, "it is often the case that reports, happy or unhappy, reach the object of them after all the rest of the world!"

"I am sure you may apply that very just remark, then, to myself," answered Renmore; "so, pray, what is the report?"

"Why," continued Golefield, looking at our hero and his host and hostess, " if I have your permission to announce it——"

"Certainly! certainly!" was the reply of the

"Why, then, it is that you, Colonel, are engaged to Miss Lawton; and, yet more, that the wedding-day even is already fixed upon."

Of course, the parties whom this piece of intelligence more particularly affected looked at each other in a spell of mute inquiry and surprise,—
Laura's cheek being pale and flushed by turns,—
her worthy sire not exactly "knowing how to look," as his mouth and eyes appeared to vie with each other as to which should be stretched open the widest;—while our hero, being the first to regain his composure, smiled, and remarked, with much good-humour and good-breeding, but less anxiety or warmth of interest in the matter than it would have flattered the feelings of Laura and her father to observe.

"Engaged, indeed, I must consider myself! for who that is able to appreciate whatever is kind or charming, can visit Blacktarn and not feel that his esteem and remembrance have been "engaged" by both the one and the other of these qualities?"

So saying, he bowed to Miss Lawton, whose lip quivered, as she looked down to the ground with a confusion that, if it heightened her charms, evinced more of pain than pleasure; while Mr. Lawton first looked at her, and then on all the party round, with an expression both of perplexity and surprise, as he asked—

- "Why, who can have raised such a report as this?"
 - "We heard it from Miss Howbiggen."
- "Miss Howbiggen!" exclaimed Lawton. "Oh! she was the authority!—ay, that accounts for the circumstance. She is a very worthy person, (ahem!) but a little too fond of inquiring into matters—(ahem!)—that do not too much concern her; and (ahem!) putting her own constructions on them!"
- "It must be so, then," observed Routhmore.

 "The hospitable and worthy spinster had expressed to me the other day how much she had wished to have the honour of Colonel Renmore's company on a visit to herself and brother; but she went on to complain that he had been run away with by her Blacktarn friends, and then indulged in speculations, which I need not mention, on the 'happiness' which she imagined was so probable an event that

she at length believed (I suppose) that it must be true, and so reported it as such."

"Yes, yes!" said Golefield; "such is the power of fancy, that it makes you in love with its gay illusions, and keeps them so long in view that you at length persuade yourself they are real. So much can the mind be perverted."

Such, indeed, was the solution of this interesting piece of intelligence; and thus was its explanation delivered, with sundry remarks conveyed by our hero in good-humoured pleasantry, at the expense of the spirit of "gossip," as the whole party now walked on together.

They had soon arrived at the border of the wood below, where a little wicket opened from the park paling on the high road, which here branched off in two directions.

"And now, Mr. Lawton, we must wish you good-bye," said Golefield, as he proceeded towards the wicket.

"What! going to leave us?" replied the hospitable lord of Blacktarn. "Will you not stay, you and Mr. Routhmore, and dine? Colonel Renmore's being with us will surely tempt you to stay."

But these gentlemen were unable to do themselves that pleasure, as they informed Mr. Lawton that they were on their way to visit their brother bard, Woodsland, at his retreat near Windermere, and expected that Dr. Esdaile would join them on the way.

In fact, they had not originally intended deviating from their track, (which they had done in calling at Blacktarn,) but were unable to passnear it without "looking in," and expressing their congratulations on the report which has been referred to, as existing only in the imaginative genius of Miss Howbiggen.

We may here remark, it is possible that a little inkling of jealousy, (already heretofore testified,) as regarded the heiress of Blacktarn, and the attentions paid her by our hero, might have awakened a certain sense of what her brother termed "fidget" in Miss Howbiggen's bosom, at the continued stay of our hero at Blacktarn; for so she termed it, though but of a few days' duration. And hence, after having placed her own construction on the matter, she had whispered about the report we have heard, in order to learn whether it would prove true or false, as it should be contradicted or not. We do not say such was positively the case, but we only offer a picture of a certain style of "manœuvre" but too often witnessed in life, and, unhappily, too often the cause of much misinterpretation and mischief.

Accordingly, Golefield and Routhmore took leave of Mr. and Miss Lawton, who returned to the Blacktarn mansion, while Renmore, promising his fair hostess and host that he should speedily rejoin them, yielded to the request of the "Genii" to afford them the pleasure of his society a short distance on their ramble towards the Westmoreland boundary, where a speedier conveyance than that of their legs would expedite their progress from the next town in that direction.

As Renmore passed with them from the wicket, he inadvertently took the wrong turning of the two branches of the road, and was recalled by Golefield, who told him, "That was the Cockermouth road;—this," he added, "is our way,"—turning into the other, and followed by our hero.

"Oh, that is the way to Cockermouth, is it?" observed Renmore, as he seemed to take note of the objects that marked the road, which, as a stranger, he might very well mistake, since both lines of road ran nearly parallel for a short distance, and no hand-post lent its aid to relieve his uncertainty.

"And what other 'reports,' pray, are there afloat in the little world of Buttermere?" asked Renmore, now coming up to his companions.

"Why, one that, no doubt, must set that little world 'agog,'" replied Golefield, "since it announces the probable marriage of the celebrated Beauty with—"

"With whom?" asked Renmore, eagerly.

" The preacher-one Quandish!"

"Impossible!" exclaimed Renmore, with increased earnestness; but checking himself, he continued, in a more composed tone, "and have we Miss Howbiggen's authority for this bulletin too?"

"Upon my word, I don't know," said Golefield;
"but I was as much surprised as you can be to
hear it. Such a charming creature victimized to
so ungainly a Goth! It is as bad as the sacrifice
of Iphigenia."

"I understand it was her mother's doing," added Routhmore, "and no doubt conscientious."

"Why, what?—are the Preacher and Gertrude—are 'Beauty and the Beast'—actually married, then?" asked Renmore, his lip quivering, and his brow becoming ashen colour, as his heart sunk within him. "Well, I must say" (he continued, endeavouring to rally) "she was worthy a better alliance. Such a fairy of romance as herself to be charmed from her wild haunt by the spell of so uncouth a soothsayer as this!"

"Nay; we may invest her with the light of romance, dazzled as we are by her beauty," said Routhmore; "but after all, she is but a creature of flesh and blood—a denizen of the thorny path of life and its realities. And if the man is a decent, respectable person, why she plays her part in life as well in giving him her hand, as if she sought suitors more glittering indeed, but after all more hollow."

So said Routhmore, and Golefield replied, "Ay, ay; if her happiness is gained in this alliance,—if she is contented with it, and the man respectable, why, she is as well wedded to this person as if he had been an Apollo or an Adonis, or any fitter suitor for a creature of such loveliness as far as our fancies might suggest."

Renmore's lip was curled with a sneer, as he repeated to himself Routhmore's words, "more glittering, but more hollow," as he thought on the character of Quandish. "True, true," he added aloud to Golefield's remark; "if the girl is happy and contented, why, well and good; but I can still scarcely credit the report:"—which he certainly did not, or he would not have delayed long in hurrying back to Buttermere to learn the truth at any hazard.

And now they came to a lovely spot, where they all involuntarily stopped short, and paused in delight to contemplate the beauty of the scenery. A lovely sheet of water, which the sunset-gleam lit up in its purple glory, formed a translucent pavement, as it were, before a peak-shaped and pyramidic mass of rock, like an old Indian temple. And here a clue was at once given to the labyrinth of "golden dreams," through which the fancies of the brother bards were forthwith led, as they stood musing over the fairy maze.

"This is a haunt where we feel we could linger for ever, through blessed hours 'ne'er felt too long! where we could live and die without any curiosity to search for scenes of greater interest, or any hope of finding haunts more lovely," exclaimed Golefield, this youthful bard being the first to break from the spell of silence. "Apart from the world, I ask no companion but the delectable thought of security from the world's intrusion,—the content and rapture that these lovely wildernesses inspire!"

"Now, for my part," said Routhmore, "though I am scarcely less alive to their charm than you can be, my dear Golefield, yet this passion for solitude with which they make you so in love as a poet, is after all a dangerous one. For man, as destined to play a social part, and as one of a set of beings mutually dependent on each other, the thoughts bred in solitude, however charming it may be, engender a furtive disease, and an impatience of contact with our fellow-men, that is sadly akin to savageness."

"Ay, you wrote," replied Golefield, "a charming stanza or two in illustration of this feeling. If you have never heard them, Colonel Renmore, you will thank me for repeating them to you."

Renmore expressed the pleasure it would afford him to hear them, and thus the lines flowed, as Golefield gave them voice:—

I.

"If, through the boundless charm of Nature's reign,
Lost o'er her Beauty's savage haunt and lone,
'Tis sweet to shun the busy crowd and vain—
The discord wide that swells the city drone—
And vindicate a freedom, ill-foregone!
Alone to linger, yet shall profit less!
Alone to commune—though for e'er it please—
Flatters too much the native savageness,
And distant thought that, furtive, breeds disease!
But with some lov'd one near, to share the wild—
A guardian spirit, thrice the track to bless—
Whatever stern hath solitude, beguil'd
It loses its worse sway, as She hath smil'd!
Rescued its gloom where the lone shadows press;
Exalted all the charm, sooth'd all the weariness.

II.

"Joys, too, our Love of Self !- forbad to waste Our rapture, breath'd unheard o'er that fair bound ! For, now, our bliss outpours it thrice to taste That charm, in the delights Reflection found In One that feels with us-in One we love! And witness'd, amid all those treasures given-Or joy of earth, or gladdening sky above-Herself the dearest boon consign'd of heaven! Her presence aiding, with new bliss, the spell Breath'd o'er you lovely maze, if add she all, Stirs in the heart the language musical Of social throbs whose chord had falter'd slack, But that her tones, sweet chiding, bade it swell! Still! her harmonious challenge holds us back To throbs humane! That heart is still our Home! That music warns us, wide howe'er we roam, Ne'er yet to lose sight of Life's genial bourn, Hated and hating, self-condemned to mourn, Lost wanderers o'er Nature's lonely track."

"The sentiment they convey is most just," observed Renmore, as the poet concluded the lines; "the solitary mania is a grievous mistake as a source of pleasure; for the gratification of our selflove in the reflection of our feelings (as the stanzas describe) is surely an increased source of pleasure."

"No doubt of it," said Routhmore; "and happy would you be, I was just thinking, had our congratulations not long ago been less mistaken!"

"What," replied Renmore, smiling; "you mean in being possessed of so charming a partner in the pleasures of these beautiful retreats, as Laura Lawton."

"Precisely! the gentleman who shall boast of winning the heiress of Blacktarn is to be envied. Dr. Esdaile, who between ourselves has no small 'sentiment' for Miss Lawton, turned quite pale as Miss Howbiggen suggested the report to us, as we called on her in passing. Our friend Esdaile was there on a morning visit to his patient her brother."

"Well; Dr. Esdaile shews his taste in admiring the lady," replied Renmore; and willing to turn the conversation away to some other subject, he turned round to Golefield and reminded him he had never seen the verses he had promised to shew him, on their first meeting near the precipice or crag which suggested those associations that formed the subject of the poem.

Golefield accordingly gratified our hero's request by reading them; and after various remarks had passed to which they gave rise, the conversation recurred to Blacktarn and its inmates. Renmore remarked how estimable a being his host at Blacktarn was, and continued—

"Yes; despite his singularity, he is a really worthy man. We have all our foibles, and there are, perhaps, few so harmless as Mr. Lawton's; though to hear Dr. Esdaile talk of him in his characteristic way makes one smile. The facetious Doctor assured me that our friend Lawton would descant as solemnly on the 'experiment' of growing potatoes by planting the 'ball,' instead of the 'root,' as if he were discussing the India Bill or the Newtonian System."

"Yes," said Routhmore, good-humouredly, "certainly, the stream of philosophy acts on our worthy friend of Blacktarn much as that of Hippocrene on some bards—it turns their heads, and impairs rather than exalts their efforts, since it is too powerful for them to bear. But what of that? Life must have some resource; and not only is Mr. Lawton's 'experimental' mania a harmless one, since it is at his own expense, but even praiseworthy, as far as the object (however ill-

answered) is concerned—which is, to benefit society."

"It is the old story of human vanity," remarked Golefield; "we all, in our way, desire to distinguish ourselves. How can it be otherwise, when there is such emulation around us? Consider," he added, smiling, "the present is essentially an age of 'luminaries.' When could England ever exhibit such a display of intellectual light as coruscates in a Burke, a Sheridan, a Fox, a Pitt? Young Canning, too, is urging forward on the dazzling career of renown, and promises to be no unworthy successor of these great names, one day or other."

"The names you mention," replied Renmore, "exhibit a galaxy, indeed. Such a court, too, as the prince's has not been witnessed in England since that of Charles II. And the style of conversation, of wit, of life, at present not a little assimilates to that of Charles. The conversation of a Sheridan, a Hanger, a Townshend, can scarcely have been exceeded in sprightliness of remark and repartee by that of the circle of the merry monarch. But it is not so gross, though the mode of life is scarcely less dissipated."

"And what are all their courts, their glare of magnificence or gaiety, to the splendour of these glowing beauteous halls of Nature around us?" said Golefield, breaking out, "suo more," in this apostrophe, after a fit of musing. "It makes me smile to think how ambitious many a flatterer about the court is, to form one of that princely circle we have just been speaking of. The thought, I say, makes me smile. For my part, a humble individual as I am, and retired from mankind, my ambition is more than sufficiently answered and blessed, in the enjoyment of pomp, magnificence, and charm, such as these rude yet lovely wilds afford, and where I am glad to dwell!"

"No doubt, no doubt," said Renmore; "but were you a worldly, ambitious man, you would as much despise this secluded life you now glory in, as you at present look with philosophic contempt on the false glare of dissipation and the glitter of courts."

"Golefield may well hold such gauds as these cheap," observed Routhmore. "His court is his Mind! There is his royal palace, whose vast dome is wide and boundless in its conception as these heavens around us, and arrayed in the colours Fancy frets it withal—bright as those chequered beauties of the golden and azure skies!"

"Ah, my friend," replied Golefield, calmly,
you speak with too much partiality. . . . Yet
who," he continued, after a pause, his countenance
glowing with enthusiasm and sensibility, "who will
tell me—except perhaps Dr. Esdaile—that our

mind is a mere result of a perfected organization of this corporeal frame? Nay, it rather spiritualizes the clay-frame, than the latter materializes it."

"The worthy Doctor speaks, doubtless," observed Renmore, "as a physician and anatomist in taking this view."

Just here the conversation was arrested, and the attention of the party directed to a singular figure, or rather "appearance," which, at first sight, it was difficult to describe, or declare "what it could be." It was floating along down the stream of Crummock water, on whose banks the party now were, and was making for the landing-place, near which they stood. The figure in question had the appearance at first sight of a huge buoy or butt, from its rotundity of shape, floating on the water; but on a nearer inspection, it turned out to be the somewhat round and pursy figure of a man, squatted in one of those little boats constructed for a single person, and called by the fishermen of the north "thoracles," or more properly, "corricles."*

"Why, I declare here is our merry Doctor come to join us (as we had expected) on our way

^{*} From "corbula," a basket. These small fishing boats are constructed of wicker-work, and compactly lined with leather, very much like the basket-hilt of a "single-stick." "Corriculum" is a diminutive: like "curriculum" for "currus."

to see Woodsland!" exclaimed Routhmore, as the little man now towed his boat, or rather "basket," up to the bank, and set foot on "terra firma."

"You see, I had not forgotten you," said Esdaile to the two brother Genii; "but having a visit to pay to a person not far from these banks of Crummock, I was unable to accompany you from Keswick; but knowing the route you would take, I thought I would meet you at this spot, and during the interval of my waiting for your coming up, I have been paddling about the stream in this odd little fishing-boat, and throwing a 'fly' wherever I thought a char might rise."

So saying, he consigned the care of the "corricle" and his fishing implements to a little lad who now met them on the bank; and having done this, he proceeded, followed by his inseparable companion, Bryan his dog, with the rest of the party.

Renmore, however, was unable to accompany them any further, as it was time for him, he considered, to be finding his way back to Blacktarn; so he took his leave, not without much regret on the part of Esdaile and the two "Genii" that he could not proceed with them to the sacred haunt of that third "Genius" of their fraternity—Woodsland. However, he promised to pay his respects at that shrine "one of these days," if an opportunity were afforded him; and with this he returned on his way to Blacktarn, where we sha"

speedily rejoin him, after having, for a short space, lingered behind with Esdaile and his gifted comrades.

It must not be omitted by us to state, that Esdaile seemed in no small degree interested in inquiring as to the truth of that "matrimonial report" already mentioned, as regarded our hero and Miss Lawton. Whether our surmise (already expressed) be well founded or not, that the Doctor entertained a certain "kindly sentiment" towards the fair Laura, we cannot as yet determine; but assuredly he appeared relieved when he found that Miss Howbiggen's report was without authority.

"We were just talking of you," said Routhmore to Esdaile, "as we descried you."

"I hope you were saying no harm of me—no treason, I trust?" replied the merry Doctor.

"Indeed, we were proceeding to upset your 'material system,' as if it had been a 'card-castle,'" said Routhmore.

"What! and myself out of the way to defend it? O grievous wrong!"

"Nay; now you are here, good Doctor," said Golefield, smiling, "you can defend it, so please you."

"Defend it! ay, and so I could, and at some length too, were it worth while. Yes; in a few words could I convict ye,—proud ones though ye be," continued the banterer; "ay, and with but a shadow,—that is, if a 'dream' is 'a shadow."

"Ay, ay!" replied Golefield, "the mind is at work even in sleep, and watches sentinel over its poor sentry-box of clay. Thus will I answer your 'instance' of a dream!"

"Hold, hold! you give a different turn to my reference to the 'dreamy topic.' It is no agency of spirit, if I must speak, that is proved in dreams, begging your pardon. On the contrary, they are but a 'material' result, produced through the medium of the senses. Bless me! I could make you dream, any of you, just as I pleased, by administering such or such things, to influence variously the 'bodily habit.' So, again, I need scarcely say, dreams arise from ideas 'stamped' on the brain, which have been previously introduced there at any time through the medium of the senses; all which militates against the faith of 'spirit' acting in dreams. Come, my 'dreamer,'" he jocularly added to Golefield, "not all your high flights can lift me away from this rock of my philosophy. A-hem!" he added, imitating Mr. Lawton's imposing style.

"Stamped on the brain! What mean you?" said Golefield. "I say, the stamp, if there is any, is the information given of its presence, by the presiding spirit, which wakes up its playful or awful thoughts, in dreams, occupying itself 'divinely,' while it compassions the sleeping body, and dis-

dains to disturb in its repose the frail clay that must house it for a time."

"Ay! what do you mean by 'stamped'?" asked Routhmore. "You really talk as if you were speaking of the impression of a seal. Explain you! Areed!"

"Why, to be sure," replied Esdaile, "objects conveyed to the brain (and Locke would approve. if he heard me) through the medium of the sight, leave the impression of what the 'mind,' or 'cerebral action,' works upon-of what is called 'ideas:' these leave a sensible impression, or image, really analogous to that of a seal-stamp on wax. Memory is nothing more than the treasuring up of ideas, or rather forms or images of things and circumstances, conveyed originally to the brain, (or, if you please, 'cerebral nervous action;') and hence, we may say almost, literally 'stamped' on it. There is no denying, then, that what you would call 'spiritual action,' or 'action of mind,' (whether in dreams, or as in the instance of memory, and to these we may add both 'fancy' and 'association,') owes its operation and agency to a communication, originally, from without, and through the Senses. It is most amusing," continued our merry materialist, " to see, sometimes, how a fact or circumstance that has happened long ago, suddenly arises in our mind, (or 'action of brain,') on some little

hinge of association being given for its revival. It really does appear almost as if the 'impression' or 'image' stamped on my brain (or, as you would express it, 'living in my recollection') were something more than merely 'metaphysical'—I mean more 'material;' and that an impression was retained, just as the impress of a seal. The essential result of the impression made from an external influence originally is precisely the same."

"Come, come," said Routhmore, "I can't Mind must be 'à priori,' for how, agree in this. pray, could a field or house make any impression on the mere physical 'lens' of the eye, unless a spirit operated to take pleasure or feel curiosity in such object? I grant you that as far as our minds are conversant with things and objects, they are in great measure so, according to such external acceptation and nomenclature as Convention has attached to them, -which is not only an external influence, but an artificial one. But though the mind looks thus on things and objects presented to it under this conventional guise or acceptation, yet this circumstance is no proof that the mind, also, derives all information from what education gives it, as telling it what objects are named or used for. For instance, Mind, looking out through the senses, would see the animal we call a 'horse,' and reason on its symmetry and strength, as well as if convention had not given a peculiar name to the thing, or attached a peculiar set of associations to it. For, to what, let me ask, did Convention originally owe all the artificial acceptations that objects have received?—to MIND, to be sure! You may cavil about the word, 'ideas,' but if you take this to mean the same thing as 'mind,' and hence say that this is not innate, you are wrong; for if mind were not innate, what would you have operating within you, to make the boasted channel of the senses of any use?"

So spoke Routhmore, with his usual acuteness and energy, while the materialist replied, as he shook his head and smiled, in token of his being yet unconvinced of mind being 'à priori'—" Your last observation begs the whole question; and the grand difficulty of the circumstance—as to whether mind is, as you say, a 'thing à priori,' or more aptly coming under my denomination of a 'result of cerebral adaptation'—can never be settled, I fear: for 'life,' merely, or 'animation,' is another thing than 'mind' and its operations, since in infants and idiotcy, 'life' performs its functions, but not the brain or mind."

"Well, well!" interposed Golefield, who had been listening with much interest to his friend Routhmore, and now took up the argument quite in his own characteristic and fanciful way; ""I

would rather,' as Cicero says, 'err with Plato, than think truly with any others!' And if my friend Routhmore errs, I must err, too, with him ! As we cannot, Doctor, unriddle the difficulty you state, why I, for my part, would prefer leaving it in its uncertainty, and fly to the certain joy I possess, in the nobler and more exalted exercise of that which I feel, and call 'mind.' Yes: under this consciousness, I feel I am-though an inhabitant of earth - yet no mere 'thing of clay.' Does not the grandeur of this scene,-whether illumined by yonder sun that now sets before us, or witnessed in the solemn beauty and awful repose of night,-does it not admonish me-does not the whispering of its spirit inform me that I am a spirit too ?"

"Fancy, fancy!" exclaimed the Doctor, smiling admiringly at the dreamer, who continued, not heeding him.

"I must be so,—to feel this very tacit intelligence of Things that exist not to the mere senses? Mark this! There is a certain inexplicable joy in this tacit communing of spirit with spirit, as though it were a 'kindred love' that greeted us! There is an 'information' in this tacit converse which the mind recognises, quite independently of anything it gleans from without! To heed any material or 'individual' object would break the

chain of its spiritual train of musings. Mark this, again! In retiring to itself, it meets that kindred spirit, too, with which it holds this exalted commune, at once harmonious and mystic. In doing so, it listens to the instinct of its divine, its spiritual nature. It is alien from earth and objects earthly, as taught us by the rules of convention, or derived from the senses. I never move," continued the enthusiast, as his whole soul beamed through his eves and countenance,-"I never move, nor walk abroad, nor commune by myself, through these 'spirit-haunted,' lovely wilds, without feeling I am 'never less alone than when alone.' I feel myself, as it were, a metaphysical Scipio-whose companions are essences not of this sphere-whose actions, though they be conducted in secret and solitude, (as far as human supervision is concerned.) are yet exposed and laid bare to the eyes of myriads of spirits and essences that hover round us, sublimely illustrating the tale of the Roman who said, that he 'wished his house were of glass, that all might see into his privacy.' Even so are all our secret movements laid open to the host of spirits that throng the invisible world around us: the greater world, I may add, and in which the visible, sensible, and material world is but a speck !"

"He is on his hobby now," said Esdaile, in a lowered tone, to Routhmore. "You can't stop

him! Look at his eye!—his rapt mood! A fine creature! Why you might laugh and talk loud without disturbing him. He would have no ears for you. He is listening to his spiritual friends and their communing."

"Hush! let us hear him. He will launch from one dream and one speculation to another, now he has fairly mounted on the wing of fancy, from this lower earth. A good idea, that of a 'metaphysical Scipio,' and his turning the Roman's maxim, 'never less alone than when alone,' to illustrate his own spiritual companionship."

"All fancy, fancy! but let us listen; he is speeding on again."

But here we must leave the Doctor and Routhmore dwelling on the words of the enthusiast, as they proceeded on their way, which they expected now soon to bring to a conclusion for the present day. The pretty little town was indeed in sight which was to be the goal of their expedition thus far.

To rejoin our hero, — on his return to his host and Laura, he was greeted by them with all cordiality, not unmixed with a certain good-humoured upbraiding, that he should have protracted his ramble to so late an hour; for it was now dark. An excuse, however, was readily admitted, when it was considered who the companions were that had tempted him to stray so far

with them. And possibly, from not being too well acquainted with the passes, he might have occupied more time in finding his way back to Blacktarn, after quitting his comrades, than would have been the case had he known that wild district better.

The warmth of the atmosphere that night was so great that the party were glad to have the drawing-room windows thrown open. They were those long "folding door" sashes reaching to the ground; and the whole 'trio' were glad to adjourn from the room to take a turn on the wide gravel terrace that skirted the side of the house; the space beyond being occupied by the "chase," where the aged hawthorns, with their fantastically-wreathed boughs, gleamed pallidly through the uncertain moonlight. But all on a sudden, as they were engaged in conversation, the attention of Mr. Lawton was called to the circumstance of a huge and lurid volume of flame rising through the dim air.

"Good heavens! one of the barns, or a rick, perhaps, on the farm premises, must be on fire!"

"It must be so!" said Renmore, as he instantly sallied forth towards the spot, accompanied by Mr. Lawton, while Laura remained on the gravel terrace, watching the "portent of the blaze," and awaiting their return with tidings as to the particulars of the disaster. She watched the forms of

Renmore and her father as far as the uncertain light would permit her to trace them; and they now appeared to be lost in the shadows of a thick copse of beech and oak, through which a pathway led to the farm premises of the estate. She stood anxiously looking for their return, when she heard a step rapidly advancing behind her, and on turning round, shrieked, to see a figure disguised in the black mask common amongst the highwaymen of the day. This person, regardless of her cries, and apparently reckless of pursuit, snatched her up in his arms, and hurrying her along to the corner of the terrace that was nearest the drive leading out of the park, placed her before him on a horse that was on the spot, attached by the bridle to the bough of a tree.

In an instant, the echoes of the chase were resounding rapidly to the clatter of his hoofs. Away the rider plunged forward on his desperate course, with his lovely charge, whose cries had elicited from him no infraction of the silence observed on his part; and by which her alarm had been, perhaps, increased. But her terror soon rendered her no less mute than her abductor; for, fainting and pale she now lay on the saddle-bow, like a lily drooping beneath the wan light and terror of tempest skies.

CHAPTER IX.

"Bertram. Stay, gentle lady, I would somewhat with thee.
Thou shalt not go. (Detaining her.)

"Imagene. Shalt not! I stand in fear!
Release me! I must break from him."

The Rev. C. Maturin's "Bertram."

To follow, now, the steps of Mr. Lawton and our hero, who, a short time before the nefarious circumstance just related had taken place, were hastening to the scene of the fire. They were speedily followed by the whole "posse comitatus" of domestics; and Mr. Lawton had the mortification of finding on his arrival at the spot that a valuable corn-stack had been set on fire, either by design or accident.

The utmost exertions were now put forth to prevent the flame spreading from the stack to property yet more valuable, and consisting of a range of barns and other farm buildings. At the same time, Mr. Lawton had begged of his guest to return to Laura; which recommendation he was nothing loath to obey, especially as he could be of no service in remedying the evil before him, and also considering that she would be anxious to know more particularly what had taken place.

Renmore had not long left his host before this worthy person also repaired back to the house, having given all directions which the emergency of the moment required. What was his alarm, then, to learn that neither his daughter nor his guest were to be found; but a note left on the drawing-room table from the latter purported that he had just returned from the spot of the fire in time to discover a yet worse disaster,—namely, that of the unaccountable abduction of his daughter; to baffle which, his guest had set spurs to his horse in order to overtake the culprit who had ventured on so audacious an enterprise, and restore the lady to the arms of her parent.

"A generous, noble fellow!" exclaimed the father. "Heaven grant he may be fortunate in succeeding: he shall be rewarded with my eternal gratitude—with all I possess—my child herself! Yes; her hand will I place in his own; for I cannot doubt, by all I can judge, that he loves her. Heaven grant he may be successful in restoring her—my only beloved child!"

Thus agitated, between his consternation at what had taken place, and his reliance on Renmore's exertions for the restoration of his daughter, the unhappy father passed an anxious night, pacing up and down the room, the thought of his loss from the fire having been overwhelmed in the keener suffering occasioned by that of his daughter.

But, joy to his heart! the next morning brought back Renmore with his lovely prize; and from the account he gave, it appeared that the hue and cry having been soon raised by some people who were up late at a village inn in the Cockermouth road, where Laura was being hurried along, they set out after the culprit who was riding away with her as described. He was accordingly (as it must be supposed) fain to rein in his steed at a turning in the road, and place her, senseless as she was, on the high shelving bank by its side. Here the persons in pursuit found her, and speedily conveyed her back to the inn, where she was recognised by the master of the place as no less a person than the heiress of Blacktarn. Here every assistance that could be rendered her was administered; and shortly after, a thundering of horse's hoofs was heard advancing to the inn gates, and Renmore himself rode up to them, demanding with painful eagerness if they had seen any one ride past, bearing with him a young lady. The words were no sooner out of his

mouth than the required explanation was given; and the fair object of his search having now recovered from the terror she had experienced, it was agreed that the next morning she should be conducted back by Renmore to Blacktarn.

Such was his account of the circumstances; and it may be imagined, if he had been a welcome guest heretofore, he was now doubly cherished by the claims that a father's acknowledgment and that of the lady herself, could testify, for the succour he had shewn himself so ready to lend, though, indeed, she had fortunately been rescued from her precarious condition before he had arrived.

Frequent were the references made in the course of conversation by Mr. Lawton to Renmore, on the score of his attentions, but as often was the subject turned aside by him, with his usual politeness, but with what appeared rather a coldness of civility than otherwise to the warmhearted Lawton, who wished to see a reciprocation of that increased friendship he now testified towards his guest.

He remarked this to his daughter, who, if she was silent on the subject, yet perhaps thought the more upon it. Nor were her thoughts altogether unmingled with pain, as may well be imagined, if she tacitly recognised that attachment towards our hero, to the growth of which we have borne witness, and which on his part was unan-

swered and unreturned, except only by his uniform politeness of attention. "Politeness!" it is but a chill answer to the challenge of love.

The paleness of her cheek silently witnessed that her heart was in some measure aggrieved; nor could her sentiments towards our hero escape him; and feeling that it was impossible for him to reciprocate them, not only from various circumstances in which he was situated, but also because his heart was already so deeply engaged, he came to the determination of taking leave of Blacktarn without any further delay. In fact, notwithstanding the interest that Laura Lawton was well calculated to inspire, from her attractions both personal and mental, Renmore's heart never swerved from the thought of Gertrude, whom he felt was rendered even dearer to him by absence.

The report which Golefield and his companions had mentioned concerning the marriage between herself and Quandish, he had indeed mocked, as utterly idle and ridiculous; yet his apprehensions were excited, lest Gertrude should have been suffering more vexation from her parent's importunity on behalf of the preacher; and hence, a report might have arisen that the union in question would take place, because it was so zealously sanctioned by dame Wetherby herself.

"Why," thought Renmore, "if my surmises are

right, does she not let me hear from her?" And then, with the impatience of a true lover, he determined on writing first of all to her.

Should the reader be desirous of witnessing the purport of his letter, we will gratify his curiosity by returning now with that view to the fair object herself to whom it was addressed, and whom it is now time we should rejoin. Meantime, our hero, according to his purpose as already stated, took leave of his host and fair hostess, expressing in his usual style of cheerful politeness the pleasure he looked forward to at meeting them at the "boatrace," or "regatta," on Lake Derwentwater, of which they now again reminded him at parting.

It was not long before his form, as he rode through the chase, was lost to Laura's eyes as they followed his way. Tears had dimmed them as she had stood looking after his track at the window; and she turned away to give her surcharged heart relief in those that now more freely flowed.

"The 20th will not be long before it comes," she said to herself; "I shall see him again soon at the regatta;" and with these thoughts the heart of the gentle Laura consoled itself as best it might.

Our hero having passed the boundary of the chase, found himself on the high road. Having ridden onward a short way, he at length came to the spot where it branched off in two directions—one being that which led to Buttermere, and the other to Cockermouth. He reined in his horse as if irresolute, for the moment, which of the two he should pursue; at length, though his heart wandered in the first of them, and his step, too, will eventually be seen following it, yet, at present, he turned the bridle in the opposite direction, and was speedily making the best of his way to Cockermouth.

Leaving him, then, to pursue his route, our duty leads us to the village-home of Gertrude. We are happy to find that after the departure of her late inmate "the Colonel," as he was termed at the hostelrie, Mrs. Wetherby had, in consequence of some politic advice from Quandish, exercised less harshness of constraint, rather than an increase of it (as Renmore had feared) towards her lovely daughter. It was considered by the crafty saint as well to desist for a few days from the inauspicious prosecution of his suit; and Gertrude, accordingly, enjoyed a period of comparative peace, and walked forth once again more cheerfully on her rural avocations.

Her thoughts were further cheered by the consideration, that though she might again be unpleasantly beset by the addresses she had already turned from with so much disgust, yet that this period of embarrassment was now soon to cease. The smile of Fenton would meet her in her dreams, and yet more that of Renmore, and fortify her as she started from the loathsome phantom where the effigies of the pseudo-preacher haunted her. The happy period to which she looked was as yet, no doubt, uncertain; but still the pleasurable dream that hovered round her heart, promising that all her fears and uncertainties would soon be at an end, hung over it all, beauteously as vaguely. It seemed as the morning mist that veils the lovely brow of Nature, from which it is soon to steal away, before the increased warmth and joy-light of day, and discover all her loveliness and radiance.

Renmore had been hurried away so suddenly that he had not time (as we have witnessed) to fix the precise period of his coming to celebrate their union. He could only say, that on her suffering any further molestation from the person she dreaded, she was at once to remove to the good curate. However, she doubted not that he would, on his part, write (if he did not hear first from her), and endeavour to let her know as precisely as he could the period of his again meeting her; and this intimation would guide her movements as to proceeding to Lorton.

That she was not mistaken in her conjecture we have seen, though the letter which she looked for had not yet arrived at her hand. It is true, he had suggested to her that she should, under certain circumstances, repair to Fenton; but he had recommended her not to resolve on that measure unless pressed to extremities, since such a step would only occasion pursuit after her. Accordingly, she remained at Buttermere, her heart beating quicker and quicker as every succeeding day bespoke that her hopes might now be the more speedily met in hearing from Renmore.

In what lights and shadows do we walk in this life !- they vary as rapidly as those shifting shadows over the verdant path yonder of the lovely herdmistress, while the sun now put forth, now withdrew his rays, as the vague clouds streamed ever and anon to intercept them, where they shone over her mountain way. It appears that on the present day she had led her herd in the direction of Mr. Howbiggen's: and on her return, as she descended from the verge of the downs to the green and shadowy lane that led back towards Buttermere, along the lake, she was greeted by a most formidable "belle," dressed like another Iris, in "many colours." In fact, if we recall to mind the portrait of Miss Howbiggen's costume some little time ago at church, we shall not be at a loss to pronounce who the person was that now "condescendingly" greeted the Beauty.

Certainly, we cannot help pausing for a moment,

to mark the contrast afforded by the grotesquerie of the one, and the simple native charm of the other.

"Well, my dear! so you are taking back your herd. I'm glad to have fallen in with you, if it were but to tell you how happy I am to hear of your being about to establish yourself so respectably. A little difference in years, no doubt; but that is no great consequence. You have shewn your good sense in choosing a partner for life who will be a guide to your youth and inexperience, rather than any silly swain amongst the young farmers of the neighbourhood. I wish you joy, child, with all my heart."

This amiable speech requires no comment. It shews plainly that our hero's surmise was well-founded—that Miss Howbiggen had considered Mrs. Wetherby's encouragement of Quandish's addresses as a sufficient assurance that it was a "thing settled" that he should wed Gertrude.

"Why, what can all this mean?" thought the Beauty, fixing her lovely eyes in a mingled expression of surprise and displeasure, at what she considered (as well she might) the unbecoming as well as unintelligible liberty taken by the grotesque spinster before her.

"I really am not aware, ma'am," she replied, what exactly you mean; there is some mistake."

" Oh no! I am well aware of the whole cir-

cumstance. However, very becoming modesty in yourself! Yes, yes, child; I shall not forget to come and see you in your new home. Good bye, my dear! good bye!"

So saying, Miss Howbiggen passed onward within the grounds of her brother's residence, near which she had met Gertrude, and was speedily beyond the reach of any inquiry as to what her "kind" expressions could signify. Gertrude, as may well be supposed, was lost in astonishment at the singular greeting she had just experienced; but considering who the person was from whom she had received it, she soon regained her composure, being aware of Miss Howbiggen's "amiable failing" of now and then spreading reports, which made the "good folk" of the neighbourhood "wonder," and were not too implicitly to be relied on.

As she proceeded for some little distance, with her herd, along the lovely banks of the lake, her attention was presently caught by another figure, of which, although she thought she recollected the face, yet so singularly disguised was he, and "transmogrified" (as the being himself would have called it) by the dress he had on, that she did not at first recognise him. She still looked at him, since he appeared to be advancing in order to accost herself, to judge by the broad grin that elongated his mouth, and the gestures he used;

and her doubts as to his identity were at length removed by his addressing her.

"Holloa, young missis!" for so did the clowns of Buttermere usually express their respect for the daughter of the landlady of the Traveller's Rest. "Holloa, I say! you wor just the person I wor a looking for."

"Indeed, Jock!" replied Gertrude, smiling, for it was "Colonel Renmore's groom" himself that addressed her; "is it you? I really did not know you again in that dress. Why this is not Mayday!" she continued, smiling, and with her usual archness. "How come you in that gay livery?"

"Whoy, now, didn't you know that the Colonel took me into his sarvice as he went to Blacktarn, and rigged me out in his own livery? 'May-day' or not, it was the 'best day' in my life I've known for some time. Oh! I'll tell you all about it by-and-bye, if so be you please to hear it. Meantime, my business is to convey this to you—'to forward it' (as you will larn) by the writing a top."

"Forward it?" said Gertrude, as Jock handed the letter in question to her, while she at once perceived that its address was a fictitious one, in order not to excite any suspicion of his correspondence with her. So, after placing it in her bosom, and informing Jock the direction should be attended to, she asked him "how he liked his new place? and how long the Colonel was about to remain at Blacktarn?"

"Why, as for my new place, I loiked it so well (for the Colonel's 'quoite the gem'man') that I should not ha' been sorry if my acquaintance with it had grown older. But its loike all other matters where a poor man fancies he's got a change for the better—too good to last. For his honour is not going to stay in the neighbrud, and foinds I shall be more in his way than of sarvice; so he told me I wor 'at liberty' (ay, that wor the word) to go where I loiked. 'Now,' says I, 'Sir, I had rather be at liberty to stay wi' a good master when I have found one.' Yees; so I told un; but a smoiled, and said no more, but only wished me well, and paid me my wages, telling me to deliver that letter into your hand."

"No doubt, as you liked your new master on so short an acquaintance, Jock, you would not have been sorry, indeed, to improve it. You would have liked him more, I dare say, on a further acquaintance."

"Ay, that I should, I can answer! Bless you, for only a week and a little more, see what he ha' given me—my wages, and a present besoides!"

So saying, Jock hoisted up his shoulder and began to dive into his pocket to produce its contents, when he was stopped by Gertrude. "Never mind, Jock, I can readily believe the Colonel's liberality; but let me know—so he is about to leave Blacktarn?"

"Ay; but it can only be for a while, I reckon. For they say as how as he and Miss Lawton loike one another so well that he's loikely to come back soon, and then they'll take each other for better or . . . whoy, how now?" continued Jock, staring with a sudden surprise at the change that his words produced in Gertrude's countenance, "whoy! how you are all come over so pale, somehow."

"Oh, no, you mistake—not at all—I'm only a little tired. So the Colonel is going to be married, you say?" she continued, endeavouring to resume her air of gaiety. "Well, Miss Lawton is spoken of as a very amiable and—"

"Why, dang it, if you don't come over pale and red by turns."

"You mistake, you mistake, Jock!—but it is growing late. The sun has gone down,—so good evening. The letter shall be delivered."

So saying, Gertrude turned with her kine in a different direction, leaving Jock puzzling with himself how it could happen that she came over "so queer-like" (as he expressed it) all on a sudden. But this topic of the good clown's surprise was but transitory, being banished from his mind by the yet more perplexing one, now he was

out of a place and work,—namely, where he should turn for house and home and wages next?

Leaving him to his cogitations,—which were divided between the inclination to stay at his native place, and resume his duties of carrier, or, on the other hand, go "by the wagon up to Lunnon, and get again into sarvice,"—we will return to Gertrude.

The moment she was alone, she took the letter from her bosom, and read as follows:—

" MY DEAR LOVE,

"I DISPATCH this by the hands of a trustworthy clown, to tell you that I shall certainly be at Buttermere by the 19th instant, the evening before the boat-race on Derwentwater. I presume you are not at Lorton, or you would have let me know whether you had been obliged to take this step or not. As you have not, I am happy in being able to conclude that you have been permitted to enjoy some respite from the annoyances you were beset with at the period of my departure. My heart is ever with you. Think of me, sweetest, and believe my greatest happiness is in looking forward soon to meet you again. I shall find you in the old haunt, on the north side of the hill.

"P.S. By-the-bye, if a foolish and impertinent report that has, I understand, emanated originally from the officiousness of an elderly lady at Buttermere (otherwise a very estimable person) should have come to your ears, you will know how to treat it as it deserves. This good person must needs 'marry me up' to Mr. Lawton's daughter here. I was really almost too angry to smile at the meddlesome absurdity of this piece of village gossip; it annoyed me much on its first coming to my ears, and is about as veracious as a report of a similar character concerning yourself and that saint, Quandish; of course emanating from the same quarter.

"Farewell, love; again and again ever yours."

If Gertrude had been sensible of a momentary uneasiness at the report conveyed her by Jock, this postscript swept it away entirely; indeed, on a little reflection she would have scarcely required the assurance of the letter to induce her, at once, to repudiate the story, and quiet her alarm. The rose which had transitorily waned in her cheek again blushed there; her eye again sparkled with its wonted cheerfulness; her step was again buoyant along her verdant path. She pressed the letter to her lips again and again—she looked again and again at the date of the writer's return—to be certain that it was thus soon she should see him by her side. Every moment appeared too long that divided her from the wished-for period

of her expectations, and as every day passed by, her heart was lighter and lighter in the thought that this interval of anxious delay was nearer its termination.

The looked-for day at length arrived which the letter had specified would be that of Renmore's arrival in Buttermere. Gertrude was at the accustomed haunt where often had Renmore loitered happy hours in conversing with her, as Chance, or some other power, be it Fate or Love, or both, had invariably led their footsteps into each other's track. How lingeringly the hours passed away,—and still he was not yet come!

"The sun has not sunk," she said; "he will yet be here. Before the shadows of night wrap mountain, and valley, and slumbering meer, I shall see him! When was it that I have ever looked for him and he has not come? No, no; he will soon be here. He will soon take me from this state of painful uncertainty—that I may not again be subjected to the——"

But here her attention was suddenly arrested, and a faint scream escaped her, elicited as it was rather by fear than any pleasing surprise, at the sight of a man's shadow, thrown in uncouth outline and proportions from behind her, upon the opposite side of the cliff. Between this and the crag on whose brink she stood, a deep and dark chasm vawned at her feet. As she started and looked round behind her, to see whence the shadow was thrown, she saw, not Renmore, but (bitter disappointment!) a person coming down the verge of the steep towards her, whose presence struck dismay and loathing to her heart, and under which she found it difficult at first to rally. If ever she had regarded him with mingled mistrust and dread,-if ever she turned from his brow in disgust of those characters of malignity and cunning imprinted on it,-she had reason to do so now. She hastened her step, as she shrieked and endeavoured to pass on from the threatened meeting with him; but, with rapid strides, and a smile of increased malice on his lip, he gained her side on the rocky parapet. It was Quandish.

"Ha, ha!" he exclaimed with a fiendish laugh, little in accordance with his general puritanical character; "do you fly me, maiden? Am I so loathsome to you that you avoid me as a pestilence? Have I not shewn patience long enough in desisting these many days past from addressing you?"

Gertrude hurried onward and answered nothing to him at first, intent alone on making her escape; but as there was yet no deflexion from the ledge to facilitate her enfranchisement, and as he still perseveringly kept pace with her, repeating his remonstrance at her avoidance of him, she was obliged at length to reply. And as he continued, calling out, "I beseech you stay your step, maiden,—slacken your pace! I would say something to you," she replied abruptly, and willing, if possible, to put a termination to the penance of his importunities—

"Anything that you can say will have little effect in obtaining any other answer than that which you have already forced from me. You have already, through my mother no less than of yourself, wearied me enough. Leave me, I request you. Surely your own sense of pride and self-respect would suggest to you," she added, looking at him with mingled scorn and terror, "to desist in addresses that are so ill repaid; and which, let me add, excite so much repugnance in the person to whom they are offered. Leave me to myself."

Quandish was ready to gnash his teeth in the anguish and fury of his heart. Even if Gertrude's beauty could ever have awakened any such sentiment as love in his heart, (divided, indeed, as it would be with more interested feelings,) it would now have been turned to bitterest hate. It demanded his utmost efforts to repress the expression of his naturally violent feelings, and make some attempt to exhibit forbearance, or even tenderness,

as with gasping breath, and a countenance pale with rage, he hastily replied—

"You may imagine what my 'love,'" (so spoke he at least, whatever he felt,)—"ay, my love for you must be, if it could silence in my heart the whisperings of that offended pride to which you appeal."

"Pray do not talk to me of love. If I could believe you even capable of any such sentiment, it would be entertained quite in vain as regarded myself," she replied hurriedly, attempting now to take advantage of a turning which presented itself along the hill-brow; but he as speedily stepped before her and prevented her progress, while his countenance, as he looked at her, wore the same malignant smile as on his first approach.

"Let me pass on my way!" she exclaimed, her anger and vexation being now excited at his interruption—"Let me pass! What right have you to obstruct me in this way?—to haunt me in this offensive, this unseemly, unmanly manner?"

"Because you will not hear what I have to communicate. You condemn before you listen; you disregard what I have to say as concerns your peace, your honour, your future—"

"I ask you again, why do you continue to hunt me out thus for the sport of your persecution? Is it not enough that you have made my home painful to me?—that I approach it with dread and apprehension lest I should be subjected to addresses that are nauseating to me?—that I am glad to shun it, and find a refuge in the solitude of these barren walks, whose worst storms are peace to me, rather than the infliction my home has subjected me to, too often of late, through your ungenerous as useless importunity? I can hear no more! Let me pass!" she continued, raising her tone, and darting a look of mingled reproach and contempt at him; for the sensation of fear with which the villany of his countenance generally inspired her had now given way to more excited and turbulent feelings.

As she spoke, the storm that had been awakened in the bosom of Quandish had gained strength, and now broke out in the unrestrained vehemence of all his natural ferocity. The fiend had now thrown aside his saintly cloak, and stood forth in all the undisguised blackness which characterized him, and which, though she had read it heretofore in the sinister aspect of his countenance, yet might well astound her in the savage exemplification of it now afforded her.

"Look you," he cried, "you have opposed me sufficiently to try the mildest spirit, and exasperate the meekest. I had sought you out, not to conciliate any longer your loathing or soften your repugnance—not even to tell you that scorn now meets scorn—but to place you on your guard as to

"Let me pass!" again half exclaimed, half shrieked poor Gertrude, whose terrors were now reasonably again awakened by the menace of the ruffian's manner, no less than by his voice and countenance. She made another effort to force her way past him, when he rudely seized her by the arm and held her back, as he exclaimed—

"Gracious heaven! do not provoke me too far! There is none near to witness what these solitudes may see. Your life is in my hands. These crags—that dark gulf below us—can never carry tales of what they may yet be the scene of."

"Let me go past-"

"Listen to me, I say. I warn you," he added, speaking through his fixed teeth, and clenching the fingers of one hand as he tightened his grasp of her arm with the other,—"I warn you against the person that——"

"Will you murder me!" she exclaimed, interrupting him. "Take your hand from me; why do you clench me thus?" and she again struggled with her utmost effort to gain the upper ground; while the ruffian, with a fiendish laugh, and a tone now lowered in the settled infamy of his resolve, muttered forth—

"Then take what you have brought on yourself! You will force me to this. Not a thousand deaths could gratify the hatred you have awakened---"

And here he had grappled with his intended victim, and another moment would have witnessed her hurled to death in the chasm below, when, in the agony of her effort to gain the higher ground away from the brink, she baffled the movement that would have been fatal to her, by seizing with the one hand which was at liberty, a projecting bough of mountain-ash that sprouted from the crag; while, at the same time, the earth on which the ruffian stood began to give way under his feet, and, threatening to fall, diverted his attention to his own preservation, from the destruction of her whom he had nearly made his victim.

At liberty now, she stood on the upper ground, and waited not in so dangerous a spot to reproach him with his guilt; but, urged by her terror, fled up the hill-brow, and did not pause till she had gained a wide and open piece of table-land at some distance off, where some of her herd were quietly grazing. Had they been yet straying over the hills, she had now no longer her horn to call them back; this had fallen from her hand in the late struggle she had encountered; and wildly did she look round as she hastened onward calling to her herd, to see if Renmore's appearance might possibly now be descried for her succour; but she looked in vain.

CHAPTER X.

"Let him not dare to challenge me of wrong.
... "If thou dost shrink to have thy guilt unmask'd,
Thou shouldest first have shrunk to act thus foully!
My stricter hand was made to seize on vice."

BEN JONSON.

ALL anxiety, as we are, to pursue Gertrude's track, in case anything further befel her, it is yet incumbent on us to inquire what were the motives of Quandish in seeking her out on the crag, as we have witnessed, if indeed his presence there was the result of design? To satisfy our curiosity, then, on this point, we shall now proceed with all promptness, in order to lose no time in rejoining our heroine.

It had been, then, with little less eagerness that Quandish had looked forward to the day of Renmore's return than Gertrude; for our hero had dispatched a line also to him, to advertise him of his coming back to pay the "hushmoney." But very different were the shades

which this eagerness wore in the bosoms of one and the other. It was darkened by hate in that of Quandish, as foully on the one hand, as it was on the other illumined by the rose-hues of love in the breast of Gertrude. "To-day was the day," thought Quandish, "by which he ought to return to redeem his forfeit life. Let him be true to his pledge, or it shall be sacrificed;—let him be true to his pledge."

And here he paused suddenly, as if some new consideration had suggested itself, and the expression of which will afford us a yet deeper insight into the blackness of his character. "But what right," he said, "have I to keep conditions with him on my part? Has not a new subject arisen for which I may plausibly enough take exception? Has he not stood in the way of me and the object that was nearest my heart-namely, securing the hand of this girl-(in spite of all his artful excuses)-which must have been mine, had this fellow been out of the way-so urgent as her foolish mother was in my behalf. Away, then, with any conditions !- he has wronged me. I will yet, I trust," and he laughed scornfully, "be as deep a trickster as himself. I will first take the price of his blood, and then will I glut my revenge on him. I will scoff at him, and tell him if he thinks he has redeemed his life, he is deceived! Ay, I will betray him nevertheless; and let him appeal to honour and truth in vain!—ha, ha!—Honour indeed! a worthy argument coming from him who has cajoled so many! Honour!—away with the mockery! I shall be a fool not to make him, if I can, my dupe, as he fancies he is now making me! I could find in my heart to rid his bated life by this hand, even without putting justice to the trouble of being his executioner! He has come across my path in my pursuit of this girl!—he has!"

But here the pseudo-preacher (and "assassin" at heart) was called again to at least an exterior of sanctimony by the approach of sundry "meetingers" of the dissenting flock, who were now gathering together towards the chapel, near which he awaited their coming to hear him hold forth. With feelings, then, thus masked by charity and truth—with feelings such as those we have heard him express, where hatred was exasperated by the additional rancour of jealousy—he ascended the preacher's desk!

It was difficult for him (as may be imagined) to smoothe his malign brow into that of his ordinary sanctimonious meekness; or even to shape its feature to that of holy zeal. For however much warmth of expression this might demand, it was impossible to throw a guise of pious fervour over the turbid and rancorous spirit-battlings that agitated the heart, and forced the countenance to bear testimony of the savage war within.

The text he chose for his discourse was that of the betrayal of Samson by Dalilah; in which his sympathy in the cause of betrayal warmed him almost to an imprudent excess of earnestness. Of this he at length became aware, being recalled to himself by the pious gaping of the congregation, and he endeavoured to soften it down to a milder strain; but place what constraint he would on himself, the rancour within still burst forth again; and in a hurried tone and manner, he was at length not sorry to bring the mockery of this disordered discourse to a conclusion, and dismiss the meetingers whither they would, so that he were then left to himself and his meditations.

With a step as hurried as his oratory had been, he advanced, now, with rapid strides towards the Traveller's Rest. "It is possible he has arrived by this time," he said, "and is waiting, disguised, for me with the money at the village inn. Yes, I will repair thither; it will be a good spot to denounce him—to lay hands on him—to shake the purse in his face—and then mock him, by telling him he has paid it in vain!"

Onward then he strode, rife in the base expectation we have just heard him express; and in his haste he speedily overtook his pious ally, dame Wetherby, who had been an auditor of the late discourse.

^{&#}x27; Ah, Mrs. Wetherby, I am well pleased to see

you!" he said, slackening his pace and resuming his conventicle strain as well as he could. "I was on my way to your goodly threshold. Verily, it rejoices me to approach the abode of peace, and where the righteous pitch their tent. Oh, grant," he added, muttering to himself, as the scowl clouded his brow, "I may but meet him there!"

"Welcome shall you be, Mr. Quandish," replied the dame—"right welcome. And in truth you do well to seek some abode of peace, for it seemed to me your spirit, during the 'discourse,' was somewhat vexed."

"Right vexed was it, indeed, (and he spoke with truth,) my good dame—right vexed. But what spirit can behold the sinfulness of the children of Mammon and unrighteousness, nor wax wroth thereat? But with due zeal on the part of the shepherd, we may yet call the straggling flock back to the fold! And here, while I speak of the sheep, let me not forget the lamb! yea, the lamb of gentleness!"

"I trow you would speak of my wayward child under that name. Alas! I fear it will be difficult to lead this 'lamb' unto the fold that would be for her weal! But step in, good Mr. Quandish—step in. We can discourse more fully of all matters it imports us to speak of, when seated and at rest, for here are we at the threshold."

And with these words, dame Wetherby entered the porch of the hostelrie, followed by Quandish, who with eager eyes and lips apart, bespeaking the breathless expectation in which he panted for the prize of Renmore's capture, peered on every side as he entered. He cast a hasty glance round the room where the villagers used to sit and smoke, and saw a person, whose appearance acted in some degree as damping for the time the keenness of feeling with which he pried. Mrs. Wetherby, meantime, had gone to her "sanctum" on the opposite side of the passage, awaiting the company of Quandish.

It has been already witnessed, in an earlier stage of our story, how little satisfaction the pseudo-preacher felt in coming in contact with one who, it should seem from Quandish's avoidance of him, was acquainted with our Judas's real character. Accordingly, he drew back his step suddenly from the door-way of the room, as anxious to slink from the notice of the object (it should seem) of his apprehension. But the keen eye of old Mike (for it was himself) had already glanced on him, and it now followed him, fixing itself on that of the preacher in scornful significance. There was no one present but themselves. It was precisely such a glance as might be directed by one man on another whom he was detecting in some act of vil-

lany. Quandish was spell-bound—painfully fascinated, as it were, (as a bird by the rattlesnake's eye,) by this penetrating search, that read his very soul,—and he felt as unable to retreat as he was unwilling to come forward. He stammered out—

"Oh !--ahem !--I beg pardon,--I was looking for some one else--I was----"

"Expecting, mayhap, to receive the price of blood!—ay, you may start," said the old man, as a smile of scorn curled his lip; "but there are things you would do less readily than that, unless I mistake my old acquaintance—Sim——"

"Hush, my good Mike,-hush, I beseech you."

"What, you are startled, are you, to see you are not wholly unknown to me?"

"Startled?" said Quandish, hesitating and pale, "no,—not at all,—or, if I was, did you not say enough to startle any man, when you suggest to him that he is coming on such a murderous errand as that you named? I—ahem!—am no such person—ahem!—"

Here the self-convicted Judas shuffled away from the dangerous presence of the old mariner, hoping to escape any further colloquy which might lead to disclosures not precisely convenient at that moment, whether as regarded his views as to Renmore, or his consciousness of the old man's knowledge of his own former movements and character.

Accordingly, he went across the passage to dame Wetherby's "sanctum," who was awaiting him at her pious tea-table, and informing her that he was called away by a friend who required to speak with him, he promised to return by-and-by, -that is to say, when he should find the place rid of the dreaded mariner, to avoid whom he now slunk forth at the door, whose threshold led upon the bowling-green we have before trodden with our hero and Dr. Esdaile. It was but a moment for him to cross this lawn, and pass over the little rude plank-bridge that was thrown over the brook, to find himself on the entrance of the walk or lane already described as running at the base of the hills behind Buttermere, and shaded with lime, holly, yew, and other trees.

"Pestilence on that fellow!" he exclaimed angrily to himself, "I firmly believe he is in league with Hatfield to thwart me;" and he stamped on the ground in the impatience of his anger; when suddenly, on turning round he started in amazement and dismay at again meeting the weird, unearthly visage of the mariner, bent on his own, like an angry spectre's, and marked with that fearful expression of scorn and significance that had already so confounded him.

"Well, what want you with me? what have you dogged my steps hither for?" stammered out Quandish, more alarmed and confused than even on his first meeting with Mike in the hostelrie.

"To answer the question you seemed to doubt it was in my power to reply to," said Mike, as the sneer played on his thin blue lip;—"to tell you that I do know you,—that I knew your charitable errand at Ravenglass, some little time past, and know it now,—that you wear no disguise for the eyes of old Mike."

"Errand at Ravenglass!" hastily rejoined the mock-saint, "I—I—really do not understand you, —you mistake me. How can you know what brought me to Ravenglass?"

"Hah! is it so?—why, you convict yourself," said the old man, with a tone of scornful triumph, which yet more disconcerted the ruffian, who had unwittingly committed himself. "What then! I have seen ere now the betrayer of a benefactor's life, and yet more, have it in my power to unmask the 'saint,'" continued the old man, with a searching and caustic significance of tone, that made the subject of its ordeal wince beneath the infliction.

"Benefactor's blood !—I don't understand you.
I—I,"—confusedly exclaimed the disconcerted ruffian, while, rising now in his tone, he endeavoured to outface by bluster the keen taunts of his questioner.
"And how," he continued, "I should like to know,

could you know anything of my movements at Ravenglass, (supposing I had been there,) unless, and which I believe to be the fact, it was yourself that facilitated the escape of the felon, Hatfield, from that port?"

"Mayhap I did," coolly replied Mike, adding, with his former searching irony, "his escape from you. What did you expect for betraying him?" continued Mike, laughing in bitter scorn; "what price did you put (then, as you do now) on the man who has befriended you and yours!—Ha, ha! A large one, doubtless,—he ought to be dear to you!"

"I tell you, I will not stand listening to these misplaced taunts, and——"

"Misplaced!—ha, ha! 'sorely placed,' were more truly spoken."

"What right have you to infest me with either your presence or your question? Hem-hem—I—I—always understood it was a praise-worthy task—hem—to consign a felon to the hands of justice:—" and the confounded "saint" brushed forward as if to escape his inquisitor, while Mike, taking up his words, speedily forced him to turn round, as he said—

"Ay; and the more 'praiseworthy,' no doubt, on the part of a-brother felon. Oh! it is 'praiseworthy' to impeach a guilt which ought to outbalance (who can gainsay it?) the remembrance of any little good done us. Very praiseworthy is it to betray a criminal,—no matter if we once shared his crime—and from whom we would never think of extorting a bribe to be silent. Hah! what! you start—you find at last that I do know you!"—and a contemptuous laugh accompanied the words, while Quandish, darting an angry look at Mike, hastily exclaimed—

"I will stay no longer to hear these malicious insinuations,—I—I—could repel them if I pleased—I—"

"Take heed, take heed, Master Quandish!" said Mike, pursuing his tone of significant mockery, "or I may chance to strip the pious cloak you bear from off your shoulders, and exhibit you in your undisguised deformity to the eyes of those you, for reasons best known to yourself, would wish to keep blind to your real merits—ha, ha!"—

" I defy-I-"

"It was this hint I wished to convey to you—
and that unless you desist from the course of a
treachery yet more sinful than any guilt it would
deliver up to justice, I will rip off this pious mask
and——"

"I say, I defy all your 'hints' and your-"

" Peace, man! and hear me yet a word further," said Mike, now changing his former bitter irony for a tone of fearful resolve, his lip quivering with emotion, and the hue of his countenance becoming yet more ghastly with the intenseness of feeling with which he spoke. "Praiseworthy as you may call your treacherous task-yet, mark me. I am wizard enough (since men will have me so) to foresee that the further you stand aloof from the path of your desired victim, the safer too will it be for yourself. He has thwarted you already, and will possibly thwart you again-may be, he is thwarting you now:-" and the significance of these words at once bespoke to the pretended preacher that the speaker was acquainted with the ill-success of his suit towards Gertrude; and his anger was about to urge him to reply, but Mike overawed him. "Mark!" he continued; "should your rancorous, your blood-thirsty perseverance yet gain its end in bringing your victim to his last fearful reckoning-mark, I say, your own doom is not far off!"

"Away with your idle menace and assumed mysticism!" rejoined Quandish, no less incensed than he was confounded. "I cannot deem you other than as the accomplice of a felon—you have borne witness yourself to as much in the affair of Ravenglass. I defy your empiricism—your

mock warnings. My character stands beyond the reach ——"

But his words (marked by angry blusters as they were) were once again cut short by the scornful laugh of Mike, who having "said his say," and not being desirous to bandy further words with a being he regarded as the most loathsome of mankind, turned from him by a path that wound suddenly up the crag, and left him repeating his idle defiance to himself, as he said—

"I see well what all this pretension to superior foresight-this mysticism with which you delude the vulgar, means. It is but a cloak for the better securing your safety in movements which I would swear before any court of justice," (he added, like a true spy and treacherous king's evidence,) "are directed towards the screening a felon. You are in Hatfield's confidence, and consequently his accomplice. Have you not assisted his escape in the Ravenglass affair once before?-av, and are endeavouring to shield him from apprehension and assist his escape again? I'm sure of it! But I will see if I cannot frustrate this 'conspiracy' yet. You menaced me, did you?-threatened, perhaps, my life? Be it so; we will see which shall be beforehand with the other. You scoff at me, do you? Wait a little while, and it may possibly be my turn to scoff!"

So saying, and considering now that the coast was clear of the old mariner, Quandish was about to retrace his steps towards the Traveller's Rest, on the double commission of rejoining dame Wetherby's tea-table, and laying wait for Renmore, as already explained. His movements, however, were suddenly arrested by the far sounds of a horn, which wound in reverberations weaker and weaker, till they died away over the spot where he stood.

Breathless he paused, listening to those echoes. As he stood mute, and straining to catch the sound, he could hear the beatings of his heart louder than any other sound,—so deep was his agitation—such a tumult was roused within him. Those sounds he could not mistake. His ear was rendered keen by the incitements of mortified self-love, of hatred, of baffled hope, and frustrated interest. Those sounds were awakened from the far crags above by the pastoral horn of Gertrude. He stood yet a brief space longer, as if considering within himself, and uncertain as to which direction he should proceed in—whether back to the Traveller's Rest, or to the spot whence those sounds arose.

"It is resolved!" he at length exclaimed, his countenance convulsed by the workings of jealous hatred and savage purpose. "I will seek her out—I will seek her out in her solitary way. An opportunity is afforded me now of forcing my words on her ear,

however reluctant to listen to me. I can dog her steps through the wild, while I pour the bitter truth into her soul, of the true condition and character of this favoured suitor. A hunted, hopeless felon! Ha, ha! A suitor to be proud of, truly! It is not love so much of which I will speak to her now; or if I speak of love, it will be but in mockery. No; it is now the turn of Hate to speak! Has she not provoked my hate?—ay, a hate whose bitterness is so great that it becomes even a pleasure! What! has she not avoided me as a contagion?—as a pestilence?—shrunk from my path?"

And here his countenance seemed darkened by a yet blacker shade of malignity,—"verily," to use his own strain of the conventicle, "as of a murderer determining on his fell purpose." Suddenly he resumed.

"But she shall not escape me now! She shall hear the whole of those high attributes possessed by him for whom she spurns and shuns me; for it seems the letter I caused to be placed in her way cannot have reached her." (It did reach her hand, as the reader will remember, and failed of its effect through the dexterity of evasion and address of the person against whom it was directed.) "Yes; she shall learn all his 'accomplishments!" and he laughed a savage laugh of irony as he spoke. "Nay, is it not generous in me to be thus candid?" he continued, in the same bitter vein. "She

shall not give herself away in the dark. And as for him-what! he is to 'thwart' me! Say you so, old augur of ill?" he exclaimed, as the words of Mike now arose in the train of these his bitter musings, and served yet more to goad the rancour of their vindictiveness, adding fuel to the flame that already burned too fiercely in his breast. "He is to thwart me in revenge, in love-in all ! To the proof! Oh! if I have no reason to triumph in my suit with this peevish and contemptuous girl, he shall have as little too. In revenge, in love, in all, will I thwart him. Not the price of a mine shall save his life ! -shall purchase my forbearance !-no sums that I can take !" and he stamped his foot in the determination of his passion. "What will you say, wretched damsel," he continued, with a scornful laugh, "when you find in this fair 'gentleman' for whom you have despised me, a felon, dragged to a shameful death? Ha, ha! Your cries will be music to my ear, that shall listen for more; nor shall be satisfied till those cries have faded over the struggle of his dying agonies! Methinks I see you pale, fainting, in the arms of the surrounding throng that have crowded to witness his shameful end on the scaffold. Ha, ha! Who will be mockedwho will be thwarted then ?"

And as he uttered these words, with the fiendish laugh of mingled scorn and exultation at these fearful anticipations, he hurried along the hill-brow, to search out the lovely object of his rancour, guided in his track by those notes he had caught of her horn. With what result he had arrived at the spot where he first of all came up with her, we have already seen; but whether he had yet relinquished her track or not altogether, remains yet to be explained.

CHAPTER XI.

"She told me what a loathsome agony
Is that, when selfishness mocks love's delights."
SHELLET.

GERTRUDE did not cease running on her arrival at the piece of open pasturage, at the foot of the hills, which she had now gained; and was followed by her herd, in no less disorder than their mistress. The kine followed her, amid their lowings, to a narrow and somewhat steep lane, which led immediately down to the high road. It was not until she arrived at the entrance to this descent or lane,-for its unevenness rendered it rather a bed of ruts than any other description of passage,-that she summoned courage to look round, in order to see if the object of her dread was resuming his pursuit of her. Happily, the glade she had passed was vacant; and, without more delay, she hurried along the descent, trusting that she should be enabled to gain the public road before she could be overtaken. Accordingly, she proceeded, calling to her herd, that well understood her challenge, to follow her steps along the descent; an object which she was fortunate in accomplishing, in spite of some very luxuriant thyme, and tender hazel-sprays, that clothed the track on either side, and afforded sufficient temptation for the heifers to loiter and regale themselves on their progress. Often was she obliged to turn round and chide them onward; and she had now succeeded in bringing her whole herd to the outlet leading into the high road, when one truant heifer, unable to forego the treat afforded it, lagged behind, and resisted the repeated summons of her mistress to follow with the rest.

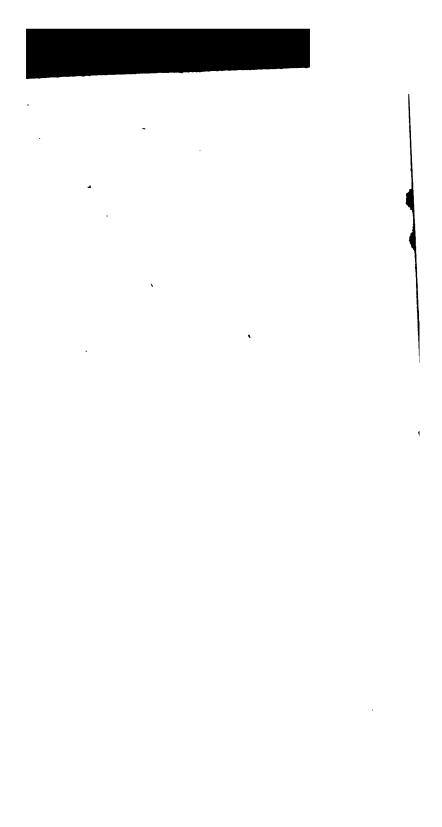
This hindrance to her progress occasioned a delay which, though slight, she could well have spared in her present trepidation; and it was not until after she had retraced her steps for a short distance, and driven the animal onward, that she could continue on her way homeward. What was her dismay, then, on seeing, on her return towards the entrance into the high road, the object of her dread and abhorrence, awaiting her approach! She forgot, in an instant, her occupation, and fled up the bank with a scream, as she hoped to evade encountering her pursuer, and arrive at the road some distance further on, though by a steeper descent. As she fled, she heard the sound of Quandish's voice call-

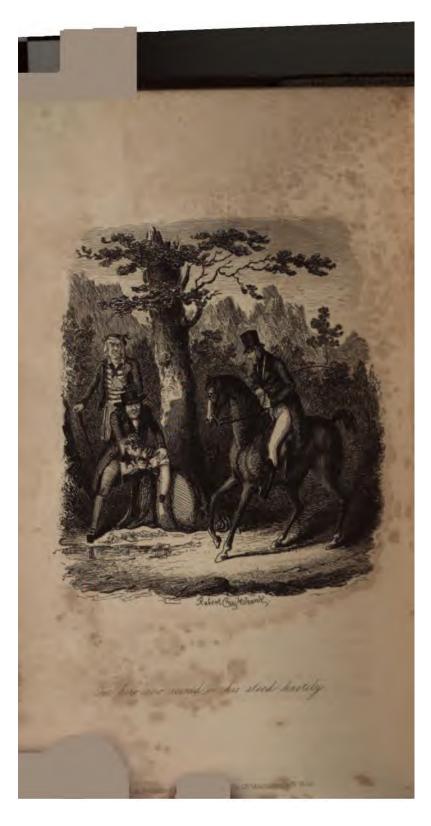
ing after her, but it was too indistinctly caught to enable her to judge of the purport of his words.

"One moment," (were the words in which he cried out;) "I ask but one moment to unfold to you the artifices of a proscribed felon; but one moment! Stay, I entreat you, and I will never assail you with a syllable more."

Such were the words he exclaimed, as he followed with his best speed the steps of the lovely fugitive; but the breeze from the hill dissipated the accents long before they could fall articulately on her ear; and even if they had so fallen, her fear and the hurry of her flight would have prevented her from well distinguishing them. She rapidly gained ground on her pursuer, from her superior agility of frame and step; and had now arrived at the spot where the steepness of the bank sank into a slope gentle enough to afford her a descent at once into the road. She was in the act of springing down the bank, when a loosened and round pebble of large dimensions rolled along under her foot, and occasioned her to fall, as she slipped backwards and came to the bottom of the bank, with a violent concussion at the side of the head, which laid her senseless on the ground.

Quandish, on his arrival at the top of the bank, was alarmed as he looked over it and perceived the accident that had taken place; and was about





to make the best of his way from the spot, when, on turning round, he perceived a figure that half-discovered itself from behind the trunk of an old oak tree on the crag, and appeared to be observing him. He therefore paused and thought it would be safer, if he now busied himself in raising up the person of the fallen Gertrude, so that he might appear to any passer by, as though affording her assistance; it being, meantime, his intention to consign this care from his own, to the first hands that presented themselves. He had scarcely descended an instant from the bank, and commenced raising poor Gertrude's head, when the tramp of a horse's hoof, urged at full gallop, arrested his attention, and on raising his head in the direction of the Cockermouth road whence it proceeded, a rapid turning in the road placed horse and horseman at once before him.

Whether to fly, or stay where he was, and make the best explanation he could of the circumstances now presented to that rider's notice, was for a moment matter of conflict in his bosom; for in that horseman the person of no other than Renmore presented itself. He resolved upon the latter conclusion, and having, in his alarm and surprise, let Gertrude's head sink from his hands on the bank, he raised it up again confusedly, as our hero now reined in his steed hastily, and demanded without

at first recognising the faces of the two figures below him-" What was the matter?"

"An accident! a dreadful accident!" replied Quandish, without raising his head, and feigning not to know who the person was that questioned him,—when Renmore, having now alighted from his saddle, recognised Quandish at once, as he exclaimed—

"Good heavens! Simmonds,—Quandish, I would say,—is it you whom I see here? I have come, true to my time, to pay you the sum I had pledged myself to provide by this day. I was spurring on my horse to seek you out."

"Talk not of that subject at this moment. I did not doubt your faith; but here is a topic that will more worthily engross the attention of us both for the present," replied Quandish, in a tone of alarm and confusion, as much occasioned by fears for his own safety as by any concern for the fate of her to whom his remarks bore reference.

"Good God! what do I see?" cried Renmore, as he sprang forward to render himself certain that it was the face of Gertrude—his own Gertrude—which he saw, as Quandish now raised her up from the ground, and would have supported her, but that Renmore himself seized her passionately in his own arms, jealous that any succour should be afforded her from any one but himself. As he

hung over her in mingled alarm and surprise, he hurriedly inquired what the cause was of the condition in which he beheld her.

"Upon my word," stammered out Quandish, endeavouring, in vain, to gain the composure he desired, in order just to cover his retreat, "upon my word I scarcely know. I was merely passing by along the road, and saw a figure fall from the bank. I suppose she must have slipped from the top, or in attempting to come down the side; but I really can scarcely tell how the accident precisely occurred."

"Then I can supply the required information," exclaimed a voice from the summit, while Renmore and Quandish (secretly shrinking as the latter did in conscious guilt) both raised their heads to see who the person was that spoke, and recognised the features of old Mike.

"I am surprised," continued the old man, in the same vein of caustic and contemptuous irony in which we have already heard him addressing the mock-preacher,—"I am surprised you should be so ignorant of the circumstances of this accident! But, Colonel," he continued, in an altered and somewhat lowered tone to Renmore, "bathe her dear lovely forehead in yonder rill that creeps through the moss from the rock on the opposite bank, and I will keep an eye on this hypocrite,

that he shall not (which he would be glad to do) escape your question, until all the little features," (he added, with a bitter sneer,) "of the accident are explained!"

Quandish augured little good to himself from the explanation of one whom he regarded, not only as so little friendly to himself, but who appeared, from the confidence and significance of his manner, so well enabled to utter the truth that should condemn him. To attempt flight would only be to convict himself at once; so he was constrained to await the menaced explanation, with a determination to contradict it, or excuse the circumstances as he best might. He exhibited at present, a well-pretended eagerness in offering assistance to Renmore in resuscitating the Beauty, whom he secretly trusted, notwithstanding all the efforts that might be made to bring her to herself, would not be sufficiently restored to be able to recognise him at once, and convict him of his inhumanity and guilt.

His offers of attention (or rather his officiousness) were, however, indignantly repelled by Renmore, who suspected the truth from Mike's manner, while he earnestly requested the old seaman to continue the explanation he had commenced.

"It was an accident, I am confident," exclaimed Quandish, interposing just as the ancient mariner was about to open his lips. "I saw her fall down the bank—there was no one near to push her down it—her fall must have been accidental."

"No doubt, no doubt," continued Mike, "the whole matter was accidental. It is an accident, no doubt, that in my way from the Raventarn across the ridge yonder, I saw the poor dear thing running like a hunted deer across the Alder-moss, (as the open pasturage, skirted by alder trees, whither Gertrude had first of all escaped, was called,) and saw, too, the hound, the 'ban-dog,' that was in pursuit of her shew his foul muzzle, shortly after, on her track."

"What have I to do with this?" interposed Quandish, confusedly and angrily, while at the same moment Renmore exclaimed—

"And the hound?-who was it?"

"A hound that if ever he was rife on the scent of your own blood," replied Mike, looking at Quandish, "is so now. Oh! you should have heard him 'give tongue' (as the sportsmen say) as he chased yonder stricken deer to the spot where she met with this accident. You should have heard, though she did not, that hound,—and here he stands," (continued Mike, pointing to Quandish,)—" clamour after her, as she fled from his loathed presence, to tell her a tale injurious to one she esteemed,—to one, he termed a 'proscribed

felon.' It was an 'accident' truly, I will grant you, that I heard what she did not."

Mike was about to continue, when Renmore, unable any longer to restrain his indignation, as he appoached Quandish, and consigned to Mike the care of Gertrude, who already shewed signs of resuscitation, exclaimed—

"Ungenerous as unmanly villain! is it thus you have taken advantage of my absence to wreak your mean vengeance on me and this weak female, in traducing me and inflicting pain on her in doing so? Were you not content by my keeping my word, in removing from a spot where you deemed my presence an obstacle to your nauseating suit? Your suit !- you little understood the nature of the person to whom you paid addresses, if you imagined that, to one of her generous spirit and estimable disposition, they could be otherwise than loathsome, coming as they did from a being whose character of baseness, low craft, and lurking villany, no artifices could disguise or conceal! But no longer will I bandy words with one so grovelling, so despicable in his villany, so unworthy the nature of man. From this moment I defy you. I scorn any longer to temporize-to conciliate one I so heartily despise and abhor. Go; attempt to consign me at once if you please-and if you canto the hands of justice. You have my challenge,

not merely my permission to do so. Add the ignoble character of betrayer and informer to that of villain."

"Your life, I tell you," interposed Quandish, his heart being bent on securing the "hushmoney," ere he put in practice his contemplated perjury and betrayal—"Your life is secured to you as far as I am concerned. Remain my enemy if you please, but pay me the sum that I have a right to expect, and for which I have thus far exercised (and I will for ever exercise) forbearance in not discovering you."

"Away with the subject of 'myself,' and the wretched luckless life it is my lot to drag along! I will no longer stoop to listen to any terms by which a day longer shall be bought of it from your forbearance. Here is the sum," he said, holding up a heavy purse before the gloating eyes of Quandish, "in which your sordid spoil is centered, and of which I will now disappoint you. I value not that which it should buy. Not a penny of it shall you gloat upon, and exclaim in fiendish exultation- Behold what I have won from his fears-the price of his blood!' From this moment I repeat-I defy you,-do your worst! I regard not myself;-I scorn you, and the utmost efforts of your malice as regards my own safety; but this unoffending, this weak as lovely being here, -was she,

because she regarded me with a confidence, an esteem, that you (such a thing as you) were never calculated to awaken—was she to be made the mark of your brutal, your dastardly and fiendish persecution? No; had you told her fifty times that I was the guiltiest of men, would she have valued me less from the accusation of such an one as you? Away, wretch, and avoid my presence, or it may be dangerous for you. Out of my sight, I say!"

Quandish's infatuation however prevailed, and his effrontery being increased, doubtless because he was aware that he had to deal with a generous adversary, while his paltry fears for his personal safety were consequently set at rest, did not take the advice given him, but continued to irritate Renmore by a blustering demand for the sum he " claimed." He was again warned to absent himself, when still persisting in his ill-timed provocation, Renmore, at length, lost all command of himself, and as they came now to the steep where the road looks down upon the entrance to Buttermere, he seized the despicable bully, and grappling with him, hurled him headlong down the height, where he left him, regardless whether he survived or not the shock that stunned him.

Meantime, Gertrude, recruited by the cool fountain-flood, and the attention offered her by old Mike during the above parley between Renmore and his enemy, had been now brought somewhat to herself again. She had been lifted up on Renmore's horse by the assistance of himself and Mike, and they supported her, and proceeded at a slow pace towards the village, which was now close at hand. The sight of Renmore, in restoring to her a sense of security and protection, added no little to restore her also to animation and comparative tranquillity of mind. It was the voice of Renmore now met her ear

and gave renewed joy and confidence to her heart. "To think I should have returned to find you thus the object of that wretch's unmanly annoyance! but fear not, love, it shall not assail you again. I am come to remove you from any further molestation on the part of this spirit of hypocrisy and ruffianism. I am come to fulfil my promise of taking you away from this spot, and removing from the hearts of both of us that uncertainty that has tried them so long. To-morrow there is afforded a good opportunity for seizing at length the long-withheld-the wished-for happiness. Our union shall no longer be delayed. You have heard, doubtless, of the boat-race that is to take place to-morrow on Derwentwater. By its banks, then, shall be the spot where we will meet-not on the Keswick side, but on the Borrodaile. Our good old friend Mike will accompany you to the lake side; there you shall enter my boat, for I must take a part in the

festival,—but fear not, I will not be separated from you. This I will arrange satisfactorily by to-morrow. All that it is requisite to say at this moment is, that you shall find me waiting to receive you, at the spot to which Mike will conduct you. An opportunity will be afforded me, during the bustle and confusion of the merry-making, to escape from the race, and hasten with you at once to Lorton. You have mentioned my proposals to you (as you told me before my leaving Buttermere) to Mr. Fenton. It is well,—he shall unite us, and nothing can then separate us—nothing, dearest,"—(and here his voice faltered as certain gloomy forebodings arose in his mind,)—"but death."

So saying, he pressed his lips to hers, as she hid now in his bosom the tears that started from her eyes. While her head leaned there, he embraced her, and kissed her pale lips over and over again, in a transport of feeling, in which anguish mingled with gratitude and love. Fatal, indeed, were those charms, that could kindle in his breast a passion too powerful to withstand the conflict occasioned him by that anguish he now felt, at the consciousness of his dangerous condition, and which might one day entail its woe and shame on her head no less than his own. It was in vain these bitter whisperings woke in his heart; and they were silenced at once, when he considered that the grief he should occasion her by now confessing them, and breaking

off his engagement with her, would be scarcely less bitter than any future trial even to which she might be doomed, whenever she should be made sensible of the fearful predicament in which he stood! Were he even to break off the engagement now, he felt he should be reluctant to inform her of the real reason for his doing so; and, then, how imperfect would his excuses be? They would seem only trivial, fictitious, dishonourable, and cruel to her,—to her, who had endured so much for him,—to her, whose return of his affection had been a world of happiness and solace in itself, when all the world beside frowned on him and abjured him.

Such were the thoughts that passed rapidly through his mind. There was, then, but one course for him to pursue,—that which he had just represented to her. Once more, then, he pressed her to his heart, and kissing away her tears, consigned her to the care of old Mike; while he himself mounted on the steed from which she had been lifted, being now sufficiently recovered to be able, with the support of Mike, to pursue her way slowly to the village, which was now close in sight.

Renmore affectionately squeezed the old man's hand, offering at the same time to put ten pieces of gold in it, from the purse which had been originally intended for Quandish; but it was declined by the old mariner, as he said—

"Nay, nay; put your coin up. The old mariner is already too much in your debt ever to be able to repay you-not to talk of taking more of you. Remember the 'tale of the deep,' and the life he owes you! The best return," (he continued, muttering to himself,) "the old man can make you is to ask a boon from Heaven for your succour, and to turn aside the evil day. speed," he added, addressing Renmore again, in a lowered but urgent tone,-" speed at once from this spot, or it may be dangerous, for this Quandish, this Judas, may have prepared an ambush for you here. So speed, and to-morrow fear not to meet me with my charge. Not far from the place of our meeting is a rude solitary inn, between Rosthwaite and Derwentwater, where you may stay through the night without much hazard. So turn your horse's head along yonder lane, to the northward; it is a little roundabout, but may be the safest after all."

The words were scarcely out of the old man's mouth before our hero had vaulted into the saddle again, and was bearing fast away up the narrow road, or lane rather, pointed out by Mike. It led quite round the other side of the hills to the north of Buttermere, and then made a deflexion, gradually verging more and more to southward, till it led into a thick wood, which it traversed, and

at the furthest extremity of which stood the solitary hostelrie pointed out by Mike.

The old man's thoughts, in the warning he had just given Renmore to hasten away, had been directed to the circumstance that Quandish might possibly soon be in condition again to exercise his malice, and pursue the foul game of his betrayal and revenge. He might, even now, have satellites lurking about the spot, and watching for his signal to start out on their prey. These considerations again suggested themselves to the old man, as he said, looking after the track that Renmore had taken-" He speeds his way well. The clamp of his horse's hoofs already strike fainter on my ear. Night and Fate, befriend him!" And then, reverting to the "pseudo-preacher," who had gained the only reward he deserved, baffled as he had thus been in receiving the sum in spite of which he would have broken his faith to Renmore-" Ha, ha! did I not tell you," (muttered the old man, his lip curled with a bitter smile,)-" did I not tell you, you should be thwarted in your dearest wishes! The lucre you had yearned for, you have been mocked in gaining; and your own outrage itself deprived you of the opportunity of denouncing the boy," (so he called Renmore,) "to this poor dear thing here, rendered miserable as she was in the mischance that befel her in avoiding you! Did I

not tell you he should be a thorn in your side, and baffle you yet? Ay, and it shall be long ere you will entrap him, if old Mike has any forecasting in him to judge of the future! At present, I give you joy of your accident of to-day! It was almost as lucky an accident, too, that the ancient mariner's eye was upon you from behind the tree—when you thought to fly. Ha, ha!"

So saying, and half talking to himself, half addressing himself to Gertrude, old Mike conducted her to the hostelrie of the Traveller's Rest, and recommending her to seek the repose she so much required, he took leave of her, promising to meet her early on the hill the next morning, where her rural avocations would, as usual, call her.

Having seen her safe home, the old man now turned his eye towards a worthy clown who was loitering about the spot. This clown was no other than Jock, who was possibly still engaged in the important puzzle, as to what he should turn his hand to, now he was "at liberty" to do what he pleased? This varlet the old mariner forthwith enlisted into his service, to lead Gertrude's kine safe into their stalls for the night; and this being done, he left Jock to regale himself in the tap-room of the hostelrie, and strode off, (like a phantom through the growing night-shadows,) back to his domicile, or cell, in the crag side.

CHAPTER XII.

"A damsel guider of the way,
A little skiff shot to the bay.
Not Kattrine in her mirror blue
Gives back the shaggy banks more true
Than every freeborn glance confess'd
The guileless movements of her breast."

SCOTT.

"Oh! haste, and leave this sacred isle!"

Moore.

THE eventful morning of the aquatic gala dawned, and many a heart beat in joyful anticipation of the day's festivities. The scene of them was one of those picturesque little islands that stud the crystal expanse of Lake Keswick, (or Derwentwater,) and, at a distance, as you look down from the heights of Skiddaw, appear like so many emerald gems set in a sheet of silver, except when the crimsons of the setting sun burnish the flood, and then the emeralds sparkle yet brighter in a bordering of gold.

Waters of Keswick! what heart, whatever its

sore may be, but forgets the pang, or reconciles it to the dispensation of Providence, in communing with your charm, where the Creator's "dreadful brow" smooths it, in smiles of love and bounteousness? Who, in communing with the spirit of peace that pervades ye, would not desire to make his abode by your fair banks for ever,-screened from the strife of the world without, amid your mountain barriers, whose proud sides, down to the wave's brink, nature's dædal hand hath painted with the mosaic work of a thousand chequered lichens and "Hymettian" flowers? It was the whisper of a spirit like yours that held the "poet-child" of Nature to the banks of his cherished Avon, as he turned, at length, for peace to them, from life's fretful paths! It was a whisper soft as this, that held Spenser charm-bound to his wild and wandering Mulla - and, Wordsworth, thee, to the haunt of repose and calm beauty, in the chosen retreats of sweet Grasmere!

The smile of nature, of those glad sunbeams that lit up the maze in cheerfulness and softened the austerity of the mountain-crags above, was caught in joyous contagion by the hearts, and reflected in the gladsome faces of those crowds assembled round the scene of festivity. Motley groups of peasantry, with their happiest looks, and in holiday attire—brighteyed maids and ruddy swains—might be seen throng-

ing from all sides of Derwentwater, from far Strands on one side and Coniston on the other, some on foot, some in carts, to see the boat-race. These, for the most part, contented themselves with lining the Keswick side of the lake, as the best site for witnessing the spectacle, in that mighty natural amphitheatre, of which Derwentwater is the centre. Those who were more immediately concerned in the "celebration," comprising the gentry who promoted the race, and those who were to be combatants in it, assembled together, with the bright array of ladies from the neighbourhood, on the island already mentioned, and off the shore of which was to be the starting-point of the race or regatta.

The oaks, at the period which we have in view, spread their venerable foliage over St. Hubert's island, the scene of festivity. Though now the spot is waste and bare, those trunks having fallen, (some beneath the axe of the woodman, some from decay,) yet, it was, as we at the time of our story regard it, one of grandeur and loveliness. The rose-light of summer-rays darted through those ancestral, those monastic oak-vistas—the wide magnificence of heaven's laughing azure—the ovation of all-rejoicing creation around—the wood-note of a thousand birds that carolled through the boughs—the discord echoes, grateful to the ear, of the

mallard's scream, as it skimmed over the smooth tide, dashing it with its wing and wheeling round in mazy gambolings,-the deer seen, some bowing their antlers, glassed in the pure flood where they stooped to slake their thirst-others gracefully couched in the moss and fern-beds strewn beneath that oak canopy-those hoar boughs, too, sweeping majestically over the wave-brink and forming an awning, now, for the gay little fleet of the regatta: -all these objects conspired to enhance the charm of the scene, and the festive occasion on which it was sought. That happy islet might, indeed, have been added to the blissful sisterhood of the golden Hesperides. And brighter yet was that island lit up in the joyous atmosphere of youth, of friendship, of beauty, of love, that shone round the happy sharers of the celebration of which it was the scene.

Independently of the residents in the neighbourhood, numerous strangers, who were visitors of the lake-districts, were present, and amongst them was the party (or cortège, we may call it more properly) of no less a personage than the celebrated Georgiana, Duchess of Devonshire. Celebrated was she no less for her beauty than her benevolence,—her charms of disposition as of person; and at whose entrance into the neighbourhood, it might have been whispered to our lovely heroine, to look even to her laurels. The presence of this much-beloved and popular lady was greeted by loud cheering on the part of the people assembled; and seldom, indeed, did she go anywhere without making all who stood in need of it sensible of her bounty. The cortège that attended her was made up of persons of distinction of both sexes. Nor must it be forgotten to mention that, as an especial mark of her favour and patronage, a young lyric poet, of the name of Lillynore, who had just "imped his wing" with high honour to himself, formed one of her distinguished train; and doubtless his wit and his muse contributed to render her tour or "progress" (to use the old language of royalty) still more desirable.

The village maidens who were congregated on the different little islands on the lake,—all of which were made the seats of pleasure-parties, no less than St. Hubert's isle,—had never witnessed such an array of their sex's beauty and distinction, combined with such grace of attire, in all their rustic lives; and when they looked at their own simple, countrified charms,—all unadorned, or at the best humbly adorned,—they might well shrink abashed, as they witnessed how much enhancement and lustre even the brightest charms derive from the magic of attire, and the exercise of taste.

As a general rule, there is little doubt the magic

of attire infinitely aids personal charms; though, again, on the other hand, it may be no less true in some peculiar and individual instance, that those personal charms may be so transcendent that the poet's rule of "when unadorned adorned the most" may be admitted unquestioned. Such might be the case, indeed, in the instance of the beautiful Duchess, for example, and certainly (and we may say so without any disparagement to her Grace) in that of our yet more lovely heroine. The brilliancy of the Duchess's complexion, and its pure transparency, could scarcely be exceeded; but she wanted the rich auburn tresses of Gertrude; nor were her features altogether so regular: her nose was a little more inclined to aquiline; Gertrude's was of the fairest Grecian outline. It would be difficult to say of which of the two the eyes were the brightest, or beamed with the most intelligence and sweetness, where those of each dazzled the gaze and the heart so much. Gertrude had a little the advantage in height; nor did the airiness and symmetry of the lovely herdmistress concede in charm to the grace of the aristocratic beauty's tournure, despite of all that the aid of fashion lent to its effect.

Having paid, then, due tribute to the charms of this illustrious visitant of the day's celebration, we turn to the rest of the fairer portion of the throng, to recognise amongst its bright maze the soft pale cheek and gentle demeanour of Laura Lawton.

Since the singular and lawless circumstance of her seizure and abduction, Mr. Lawton had not ceased mentioning it, coupled with the acknowledgments which he rendered to "the Colonel," who had effected her rescue so promptly. Who the hardy being was that perpetrated the outrage had not been discovered. It may be imagined, that having witnessed the pain with which Laura saw our hero take leave of Blacktarn, we may expect her at present to look round the throng with no small anxiety to see him again.

We remember Mr. Lawton's having mentioned at Blacktarn the floral exhibition which was to take place previously to the aquatic festivities. The choicest specimens of Laura's conservatory were accordingly displayed, to the admiration of all who saw them. Never was the triumph of horticulturist more complete than hers, when Mr. Lawton referred to his daughter all the merit bestowed on their training; and his triumph was not less than hers when he heard the commendations showered on her.

The lovely Duchess presided at the distribution of the prizes. Where all was so beautiful, difficult indeed was it to say whether the flowers of that wide garden of human life did not outshine those of the horticulturist's care. Flattered as poor Laura might have been, yet there was one from whom she would rather have received a syllable of approbation than from all the distinguished train that complimented her. It is scarcely necessary to say that this one person was our hero.

Renmore had not yet made his appearance; but when he did, what was the silent pang of mortified love (for it must be expressed) which she sustained, when, in the midst of her triumph—ere yet the murmur of approbation had died away—she witnessed his presence, accompanied as she now saw him! The person, whose praise she would have valued before that of every one else, advanced to the stand where the flowers were set forth, leading the humble village maiden, Gertrude, by the hand, while he bowed to the Duchess, as he thus addressed her:—

"Your Grace has witnessed some most beautiful specimens of my friend Mr. Lawton's garden; and that they would have borne off the prize from all others no one could doubt, who knew that the fair hand of Miss Lawton reared them;" and here he bowed to Laura with his usual grace of manner; "but your Grace has no doubt heard, on your visit to these romantic regions, of an object of attraction that all desire to see when they approach this neighbourhood; permit me, then, to present

to you the flower which we chiefly boast of in this Eden of the lakes,—the 'Rose of Buttermere!' and if her blushes burn a little more warmly than usual, it is because she has seldom appeared before so much splendour and distinction; and, let me add," (he continued, bowing,) "before charms that may well make her tremble for the supremacy of her own."

All eyes were now turned on Gertrude, whose eye and countenance, animated as they were with the excitement of the festival, and the joy she had experienced in meeting our hero again that morning, according to her expectation, looked more transcendently lovely than ever. Even her fair fellows of the neighbourhood—her village compeers—who had known her from childhood, were held in the same trance of admiration in which every one now contemplated her.

Mr. Lillynore put up his glass, and first eyed his distinguished patroness, and then Gertrude, declaring to himself, "Upon my life I don't know which is the loveliest creature of the two. I think (though I would not say so for the world) that I should find no such inspiration for an ode as in that lovely denizen of the lakes. She beats 'Nora Creena' even, to nothing—all to nothing!"

So saying, the bard continued feasting his eyes on our heroine, while Her Grace exclaimed, with more than her usual benignity, rather than with any illiberal inklings on the score of her own charms being outshone—

"Is this, then, the celebrated Beauty of Buttermere? I am most delighted to have been made acquainted with one I had so much desire to see. I'm sure, Mr. Lillynore," she continued smiling, and turning to the melodist, "here is a theme of inspiration from which the world might expect another series of Melodies."

"Divine! heavenly!" exclaimed the poet;
"she surpasses all I have heard of her; and if, as
in the old times of chivalry, a prize for beauty were
to be instituted, I am sure it would be round the
neck of Gertrude of Buttermere that we should
hang the chain, and wreathe her brow with the
rose-woven garland!"

"Nay; we will not be behindhand with the gallantries of any age, however chivalrous," replied the Duchess, smiling as she took from her neck a splendid chain of gold, with a topaz cross glittering at the end of it, and hung it round the neck of Gertrude, while she accompanied the gift with many kind words of esteem and countenance, of which she begged Gertrude to consider it as a remembrance.

Mr. Lillynore could scarce refrain his rapture, and declared to his next neighbour that he did not know whether the charm of benignity that lit up his patroness's beauty did not even render her more beautiful than Gertrude herself. In truth, there was a grace and witchery in the distinguished person in question, that had no small effect in enhancing her natural charms, for she won all hearts by the graces of her condescension and generosity. The charms of her mind, the excellences of her heart, rendered her yet lovelier in the eyes of all who saw her; and if this tribute is paid her now, perhaps the future events of our story, in which we may again meet her, will confirm us in offering such a testimony to her excellence.

Our hero, now, after having once again made a salutation to his Blacktarn friends, led Gertrude away, glowing amidst her blushes, with mingled gratification and confusion at having been thus singled out as the mark of observation in so brilliant and numerous a circle.

"Dear Gertrude," whispered our hero in her ear, "have I kept my promise in meeting you? Blessings on old Mike for having brought you here to join me! I never saw you look so beautiful. How my heart has beat for this moment! To-day is to be fulfilled the engagement we had both agreed upon. The boat-race will give us a favourable opportunity. I will take advantage of a turning to be made round the furthest island, which will be the

course of the race, and row to the creek, northward, instead of returning. You will be taken with me in the boat I shall row; and we will no sooner land than we will set off to Mr. Fenton's, and delay no longer to accomplish our union."

These words, uttered, as they were, in much less time than it has taken us to write them down, were answered by a pressure from the hand of Gertrude, and a smile that played on her sweet ruby lips, affording an answer to our hero that spoke to his heart more than any words could have done.

Other, far other, were the feelings of Laura. The increasing paleness on her cheek bespoke the silent pang of which she was sensible. She had looked forward to seeing Renmore by her side—to his conversation—attention—all it would have flattered at once and rejoiced her to receive from him. Little did she dream of his being engaged in marriage to another—and that other the humble, though lovely, herd-mistress! Little did her heart now swell with any innocent pride, on the prize for the flower-exhibition being awarded to herself; it was too much wrung to permit it to be sensible of any such pleasurable sensations, though all around expressed their gratification.

No little impression was made on the Duchess, and the distinguished party in her train, by the happiness of manner with which our hero had offered an improvement on the exhibition, on his "presentation" of the "Rose of Buttermere."

"Vastly prettily managed—eh, Mr. Lillynore?" said one of the party to the bard.

"Delightful! And as for the girl, she is an impersonation of all loveliness, living or ideal—a very living poem!"

" Who is he?" asked the Duchess.

"Colonel Renmore," was the reply of one of the gentleman of the neighbourhood.

"Colonel Renmore?—that is odd! Is he any relation to the Member for Linlithgow?"

"The same, I believe," was the reply—"Renmore, of Clan-renmore."

"That is odd. There must be some mistake."

But whatever might have been the cause of the Duchess's surprise, or the purport of her remark, it was cut short by the shout that now announced that the boats were ready to start; and all persons forthwith adjourned to the brink of the island, where the various little skiffs, distinguished by pennons of different colours, were drawn up in line, and the rowers seated, with their oars poised over the boat side, ready to plunge them at once into the tide, and skim through it.

Each boat was distinguished by a colour named by different ladies respectively of the party. The Duchess's colour was blue—" true blue"—the colour of Fox's voters at Westminster, when she canvassed for him. This skiff was rowed by a gentleman of her retinue. Miss Lawton's boat was marked by a violet flag; but the interest of the race was lost to her, no less than that of the flower exhibition, in which she had won the prize. The hues of those rose-blossoms her care had fostered—could she not borrow a tint of their lustre to warm the faded light in her own soft cheek?

"You are not well, child?" said her father, tolerably aware of the cause of her secret mortification, since he partook of it in no small degree himself. "On whom is it your eyes are fixed amongst the rowers of those boats?—on Colonel Renmore? Oh, never mind looking at his boat; look at that which bears your own colours."

"Yes," she replied; "but don't you see there is some one in his boat?"

"Pooh! he is, I observe, just by way of being good-natured, letting that village girl, whom they call the Beauty of Buttermere, have a 'row' in his boat, in order, poor thing, to complete her 'holiday-making.'"

So said the worthy lord of Blacktarn, who, though he tried to rally his daughter's spirits by speaking thus indifferently, was not sorry to propose to her to retire from the front ranks of the festive group; and, accordingly, having led her to the other side of the little island, he was no less content than herself to withdraw from the festivity, whose celebration had been thus untowardly clouded for them both; and having stepped into a boat, they rowed to shore without more delay, and returned forthwith to Blacktarn.

Mr. Lawton felt both mortified and indignant at having many fond speculations, as regarded our hero and his daughter, damped by witnessing, on the late occasion described, how little she received of his attentions. Perhaps he might have been too rash and sanguine, in having formed such speculations. This, however, was the error of his temperament and character; and if, at present, he is seen to have cause of discontent, he may perhaps hereafter have reason to acknowledge the truth of the old adage, (in opposition to Voltaire,) of "all being for the best;" and, with this remark, we will, for the present, take leave of himself and Laura, and return to the scene of the "regatta," as now about to take place.

No spectacle, in fact, is more interesting, under a glowing summer sky and upon a pure glassy expanse of lake, than a boat-race. Ye who have passed joyous hours on the lakes of Upper Italy, voyaging from myrtle-bowered islet to islet,—ye, again, who have marked the happy peasants on the Swiss lakes, voyaging with their market produce,—
(teeming melon, and gourd, and grape,)—well will
ye remember the calm sweets of those scenes, rural
at once and aquatic. The tranquil content of the
heart was emblemed in that pure calm flood over
which those motley forms glided, and in which
many a cheerful brow glassed itself, as it looked in
smiles on the wave of loveliness. But wilder
cheerfulness respired through a scene like this now
before us. The spirit of emulous joy, that swelled
in the bosoms of those competitors for the meed of
dexterity, echoed a new song of gladness through
the fair watery bound.

The presence of the Beauty of Buttermere in our hero's boat has been already specified. There she sate, like the lovely Battelière of Lake Leman, on the Vevay coast, of a later day, and acted as "steerswoman;" for having been so long a habitant of this region of the flood no less than mountain, she had added to her other rural accomplishments that of much adroitness in the management of a skiff.

Forward flew Renmore's boat, to which she thus imparted an additional object of interest, and which speedily took the lead, by some distance, of the whole train of skiffs that followed.

Scarcely had the burst of cheering subsided, amidst which the rowing-match had set off, when

the attention of the spectators was called to a loud and vehement shouting from the border of the lake on which Keswick stands. The cause of this shout was beyond the solution of any one present; but whatever it might be, its tone appeared to indicate that some circumstance of danger, or alarm, had taken place, which it was hoped would soon be explained by a person who was now seen rowing with all his might towards the island. Meantime, as if by magic, as if raised by the spirit of the lake, a little bark appeared in the middle of the waters, carrying as its master a venerable old man, who impelled his boat in the direction of Renmore's, which had now more and more gained in distance upon the rest of the train, and was very nearly arrived at the furthest island, where the turning was to be made previously to the boats coming back again to their original place of starting.

"What boat is that?" asked one of the spectators, "and who is the old man in it?"

"I know not," replied his next neighbour, "unless it be old Mike. His movements are often unaccountable, and whence he made his appearance thus suddenly on the lake I can't imagine. All I know is, that he is not where he is without some good reason. I should not be surprised if his presence there has some connexion with the subject of alarm that has just been announced to us in the shout from shore."

Such was the reply which was made by one of the party, who, as being a resident in the neighbourhood and acquainted with Mike, was able, thus far, to form a conjecture on this new topic of surprise.

His conjecture was not a mistaken one. The form that appeared in that boat was the "ancient mariner's." It was from a bay in the furthest islet, just specified as the goal of the race, that his skiff had glid forth on the lake, unseen by the spectators on the other island, just at the time when their attention was called to the shout that arose from the Keswick, or opposite border. How far the conjecture above expressed was correct-namely, that the ancient mariner's sudden presence had some unaccountable connexion with this cause of alarm-we are unable as yet to determine. Suffice it at present to say, that with scarcely more than three strokes of his oar, his skiff was by the side of Renmore's, when he said, in a wary tone, and leaning over the boat's side-"You hear that shout from shore? . . . Row for your life!"

Scarcely were the words out of the ancient mariner's lips than Renmore's boat had glided into the creek by the north shore of the lake. The water just here formed a narrow strait between the islet and the shore, and as Renmore's boat was far in advance of all the others, he had turned the corner of the islet which was the goal of the race, and was hidden in the creek before a single one of the other boats of the train had arrived in the strait. When they had arrived, their rowers, not seeing Renmore's boat, concluded of course that he had turned the goal, or rounded the islet, and was on his way back to the starting-place, out of their sight. Be this as it might, Renmore, with his lovely freight, had disappeared like a morning mist from the face of the waters.

CHAPTER XIII.

"Adoun he go'th, and tell'eth the master sone,
In what array he saw this ilke man,
The master-wight to blissen him began,
And said, 'Now helpe us, Seinte Fredeswide,
A man wote litel what shal him betide.'"

CHAUCER.

It would be an ill compliment to the reader's gallantry to suppose, notwithstanding the galaxy of female attraction he has already witnessed, that he has not missed the charm of Miss Howbiggen's presence from amongst it. Of all others, this lady had looked forward with interest to the day's festivities. It must therefore be our duty, before we proceed to anything else, to explain the causes of a delay that has hitherto deprived the island assemblage of the fascination and ornament of one so well calculated to offer both. And it may, possibly, be the case, that in entering upon the solution of this important point, we may also be

enlightened with regard to the import of the sudden presence and warning of old Mike as just witnessed.

A person so alive to all that is due to an observance of the "social charities" as Miss Hetty Howbiggen, was of course on the alert to set forth on the happy morning of the regatta. The carriage was already at the door, and she was awaiting the presence of her "amiable" brother, in order that they might proceed at once on the expedition. At last, the invalid made his appearance; his brow contracted and his back bowed; coughing and grumbling by turns.

"I don't at all wish to go," he said, "not at all,-ugh, ugh!"

"My dear brother, when did you ever wish to be obliging? Come, pray say,—are you going or are you not?—if you are not going, do (I beg of you) let me know this at once, that I may proceed by myself. The carriage has been at the door for almost an hour past, and yet you seem to stand irresolute as to whether you will go or not. This is really sadly provoking. Come, what will you do?"

Mr. Howbiggen, who had been standing on the brink of departure, with the indecision of a chilly bather who hesitates ere he plunges into the liquid depth, was now "peppered" into a different feeling from that of his chill of indecision. He now kindled into something like warmth, under the goad of provocation, which he considered his worthy sister's urgency to be.

"Ugh!—'sadly provoking' is it, my not gratifying your impatience in a moment! Thank you for the complim—— (ugh, ugh!—coughing,) compliment. I think it is enough to make a man hesitate, such a cold on his chest and cough as I have."

Here a violent fit of coughing ensued, which occasioned a delay, not only in Mr. Howbiggen's upbraiding, but in the departure for Keswick, which was even yet more to Miss Howbiggen's dissatisfaction; for her brother's grumbling she considered a "matter of course," and she took it good-humouredly; in fact, she would have been surprised at any other mode or character of address on his part. But the delay, protracted more and more as it now was, occasioned her positive anguish. She was ready to cry with impatience, and could scarcely forbear stamping her delicate foot on the ground, as she exclaimed—

"Oh, dear! oh, dear! this is dreadful,—perfectly dreadful!"

However, she softened the impatience of her tone into an accent of somewhat more concern, on perceiving the violence of the cynic invalid's coughing. His eyes appeared to be almost starting from the sockets, in the straining occasioned him; while his cheeks were bloated and puffed out to a formidable tension, something like that of the representations of Boreas, and their colour was livid as an over-ripe fig. No wonder Miss Howbiggen was alarmed at this spectacle.

"Good gracious! my dear Tobias," (such was Mr. Howbiggen's baptismal appellative,) "this is more serious than I imagined your cough could have been. Well, suppose you stay, and I will go alone without further hesitation on the subject."

"No, no!" replied Tobias, wiping his eyes, which had been watering copiously, and still coughing, though in a diminished degree—"no, no; I will accompany you,—you wished that I should do so,—you shall have your own way; but mark my words, the damp from the water will increase this affection of the chest,—this business will be the death of me."

"Then why not stay?" interposed Miss Howbiggen, her impatience kindling again.

"No, no!" rejoined Tobias, passing on with a cool, upbraiding air; "you shall have your way, (I tell you again,) of forcing me to go with you."

"Nay, nay! there is no 'forcing' you at all. I thought merely it would amuse you to go."

"Mind," continued the crabbed invalid, pretending to act under constraint, and exhibiting himself as though wronged by his sister, in a manner that might reasonably provoke that lady's impatience,—" mind, this affair will infallibly be the death of me. I go to please you,—well, well!"

"Then, pray stay," cried Miss Howbiggen;
"I'm sure, whatever is most satisfactory to your-self will please me best."

Our cynic, however, passed on to the carriage, without taking any notice of her request; only gratifying his spleen by his usual grumbling reflections. "It is always so. Whenever one is ill, there is sure to be some pestiferous engagement of this kind,—ugh, ugh! When a man does not wish to go out, he is sure to be plagued to do so; and when he does wish it, he is sure to be ill and unable to go; or if he does go, is little fit to do so. Provoking and contradictory!" Thus saying, he took his seat in the carriage, while Miss Howbiggen seated herself by his side.

Away, then, they went, nor did our invalid open his lips, or rouse him from his sour reverie for some time. At last he exclaimed—

"Well, thank Heaven, we have got down that hill without being overturned!" which ejaculation he was delivered of as the carriage had now arrived at the bottom of the Borrodaile steep, and was proceeding with accelerated pace along the southern margin of Derwentwater, on its way to Keswick, which was close at hand. "Thank Heaven!" he continued, "we were not upset and rolled 'head over heels' into the lake, like one of the water fowl you may see making 'summersets' over its surface. It is a wonder we were not!"

"No wonder at all, Mr Howbiggen, begging your pardon," replied his more amiable sister; "if the coachman exercises caution, and understands the management of his horses, I don't at all see why we should expect any such misadventure."

"Pooh, pooh! I tell you that down such a steep as this which we have just passed, a mere crow flying across the way and startling the horses might have occasioned an overthrow, and the forfeit of our necks. I have known the accident happen a dozen times since our unlucky visit in this tiresome neighbourhood. Why, the shadow of those windmill sails thrown across the path, just at the bottom of the ascent, has occasioned many a horse to run away. Lord, what a jangle and noise those bells of Keswick make! I wish they were muffled."

"A most uncharitable wish, I'm sure," replied Miss Howbiggen, who was delighted to hear the merry peal which echoed clamorously from the belfry of Keswick church tower, and sounded over the waters of the lake below, announcing a day of revel and holiday-making.

"Ay, ay; those bells may have to chime forth a

different lay before the sun has set!" grumbled out the cynic; "for it is a hundred chances to one but that somebody or another will be drowned in this nonsense of boat-racing and water-frolic. Foolery on dry ground is mischievous enough, without making matters yet more insecure. Ugh!—umph!—ugh!"

"Do cease this dreadful croaking!" exclaimed Hetty, now almost losing her patience under the provocation occasioned by her brother's unrelenting asceticism; and she was just going to launch forth into a tirade of philosophy, grounded upon a more cheerful foundation of reasoning than his own, when her attention, no less than Mr. Howbiggen's, was called to the circumstance of a loud clamour and dispute which reached their ears, as they passed now through the principal street of Keswick, on their way to the hostelrie, where their carriage was to be left while they proceeded on foot to the lake-border.

The clamour arose from a knot of persons collected in front of the "post-office;" and as Miss Howbiggen, with characteristic curiosity, was all anxiety to know what the subject of dispute "could possibly be," she pulled the check-string and desired the coachman to draw up on the opposite side of the street for a moment, with a view to overhearing what passed, and informing herself of the desired intelligence. "Pshaw!—pooh!" observed her brother; "who wants to know what the cause of dispute is? What is the good of stopping here in this idle, absurd, obstinate, dawdling, useless manner?"

The splenetic gentleman would in all probability strung on a yet greater multiplicity of testy epithets, had he not been stopped short by his sister saying—

"Hush! Mr. Howbiggen; the cause of dispute is more important than you imagine. I am confident I heard the name of Colonel Renmore uttered—"

" Pshaw !-pooh !---"

"I'm sure I did! Pray listen a moment."

"Ugh! I knew there would be some jangling—some disturbance, or accident—before this day of holiday-making had passed; but I little expected to find my words made true so speedily!"

"Now, pray don't grumble any more just at present, Mr. Howbiggen, but listen. Don't you hear that man, the master of the post-office, accuse the little gentleman in a brown great coat, with a red worsted cravat folded round his throat, of having forged the signature of Colonel Renmore?"

"What!" replied Mr. Howbiggen, now involuntarily being roused into something like a participation in his sister's interest in the subject of dispute. "What do you say?" "Do you not hear what the man says?—he accuses that gentleman of having franked a letter in the name of Colonel Renmore, 'for which person he pretends to pass himself off!' These were his words."

Mr. Howbiggen made no reply, but leaned his person forward from the carriage window, in order to hear more clearly the charge, in her account of which he thought his sister might be mistaken, as he was always inclined to be somewhat sceptical as to the exact authority of her "hearsays." In truth, as we may remember, they were a little questionable.

Thus, then, the tide of dispute rolled on in front of the post-office, and the following were the objurgations addressed by the post-master to the before-mentioned little gentleman in the brown great coat and red worsted "cravat."

"I say, you have been franking a letter in the name of Renmore, which you had no business to do! And I shall have you taken up."

"You scoundrel!" replied the little gentleman, very much excited; "take your hand off my collar this instant! How dare you be guilty of such an outrage, or charge me with passing myself off as another? How dare you, I say——"

"Ay, ay,-it is all very well talking; but you shall talk to the constable and the magistrate too.

since you don't admire talking to me. Holloa!

Master Groat, I'm glad to see you here—here's a
gentleman I must recommend to your company, in
order to walk with him to Justice Briggs."

"Why, what's the matter?" asked a stalwart, tall, ruddy-faced yeoman, cased in corderoy, as regarded the fashion of his "nether man," and in well-worn velveteen, as regarded his upper. This worthy was Master Groat, the constable, who now laid his clutch on the shoulder of the accused person,—whose wrath was kindled yet more and more to witness himself thus deprived of his liberty, to say nothing of the insult offered his dignity, if, indeed, the charge of being an impostor and post-office swindler were really without foundation.

"I say! let go your hold of me!—how dare you offer this outrage to a member of parliament in the exercise of his privilege! You shall bitterly repent this! Everybody knows me! Everybody knows Colonel Renmore."

"Ay, to be sure, every one does!" exclaimed both the postmaster and Master Groat the tipstaff. "And every one knows you are not the man," they added.

"He the man!" exclaimed one of the crowd,
that he is not. Colonel Renmore only passed
through Keswick a short time ago, and is now with

the company on the lake, where the boat-racing is going on."

"Take him away to the justice!" cried another of the crowd. "We all know he is not Colonel Renmore!"

"Nay, that he certainly is not," observed Miss Howbiggen to her brother.

"How do you know that?" growled out that sceptical gentleman. "Appearances often go against the most honest and honourable of men. I'm not at all so sure that this gentleman they are handling so unceremoniously is any other than the person he describes himself to be."

"Well, then, if he is the real Colonel Renmore, why, the one whom we know must be the impostor—unless there are two members of parliament of the same name."

"Pshaw! you might as well talk of two tails to the same horse. But just be quiet, my good Hetty, one moment—I want to hear what the accused gentleman says."

"If I really am an impostor take me by all means to the magistrate," exclaimed the gentleman under arrest, "but I warn you first of all to be a little more sure whether you are taking an innocent man into custody or a scoundrel."

"Oh, we are sure enough of that!" exclaimed Master Groat, while the mob set up a shout of laughter, by way of chorus to the chuekle that accompanied the constable's words, as he proceeded to "hawl along" his captive to Justice Briggs's domicile, on the hill.

"That is the best argument the worthy M.P. can utter," chuckled out the post-master, triumphing in the arrest of the accused person. "'If I am innocent,' he says,—that is capital!—'if—'"

"Yes, if!" replied the arrested member; "you had better not subject yourselves to penalties for a 'breach of privilege,' in arresting a member of parliament," he continued, in a voice hurried and broken by the excitement of his anger, which the mob instantly mistook for fear, and shouted out that "his look alone would condemn him!"

"Pshaw!" observed Mr. Howbiggen; "what man is there who would not exhibit consternation were he solemnly accused of being a swindler or murderer, by a set of people unwilling to let him explain his innocence? Why, I should look frightened to death!"

"I came here," continued the M.P., "with a party of friends and people of distinction; let them be summoned at once, and they will inform you who I am!"

"Where are they, then?—where are they?" exclaimed post-master, mob, and constable, with one acclaim. "They ought to be at the island on the lake—they are gone to witness the boat-race. I remained behind here, to write some letters, with the intention of joining them after I had despatched the letters. I tell you, bring my friends here, that they may inform you who I am—I came here with the Duchess of Devonshire and other friends, and I insist, this instant, on your sending for them and liberating me."

How far Master Groat, and the ragged cavalcade at his heels, would have been inclined to listen to their captive's representation, it is difficult to pronounce, had not an advocate for his cause sprung up, in the person of a man who, having gleaned intelligence of the cause of the village uproar, had forced himself forward to the constable, as he exclaimed—

"Take that gentleman another step further at your peril—he is no other than the person he represents himself to be—I have good reasons for knowing that he speaks the truth, and, my good friends," he continued, turning round to the crowd, "when did I ever deceive you yet?"

"No, no, Measter Quandish, the worthy preacher of Buttermere, (for it was himself,) speaks rightly enough. Let go the gentleman, and let us hear Measter Quandish's reasons for thinking him innocent!" So spoke the mob, while the brawny hand of Groat was removed from the shoulder of his captive, as the attention of every one was now directed towards Quandish.

To account for this individual's sudden appearance in the scene before us, it appears that having, after no very long time, recovered from the effects of the shock he sustained under the chastisement of our hero, he slunk off to Keswick at once, in order to summon the myrmidons of justice, to aid him in securing Renmore. These persons, we remember, he had pledged himself to remove and dismiss from their pursuit, on the occasion of being promised the "hush-money" by our hero, on their first meeting. He had, however, taken care they should not quit the spot, and had only suspended their pursuit, which he now, more warmly than ever, urged them to renew. He told them he had sanguine hopes of being able at length to trepan the object of their common search, as, no doubt, he would be present, under some disguise or other, at the boat-race.

Lurking, then, in Keswick with these malignant considerations, Quandish was now delighted to find a ready clue given to the object he panted to attain. All anxiety was he to corroborate the truth of the arrested gentleman's declaration of his innocence. All eagerness was he to proceed with

Groat to the "lake-island," (to which he had already intended proceeding,) in order to arrest the "real frank-forger," the real impostor, and soidisant M.P. Meantime, having been regarded by the mob with reverence, on account of his character of preacher, every word he uttered found weight with them, as he proceeded thus in his task of exculpation of the accused person.

"You may take my word for it, my friends, this gentleman is the real Colonel Renmore."

"Then who is the man that has passed himself off all this while upon us as the 'Parliament-man,' and 'Colonel,' and Lord knows what?" asked, simultaneously, two or three voices in the crowd, pre-eminent amongst which was that of Master Groat, the constable.

"The man that has so passed himself off is no less than the notorious forger and swindler—Hatfield!"

"Hatfield? What? the famous 'Gemman Hatfield?" (so they pronounced his soubriquet of "gentleman,") exclaimed every one present, including not only Groat and the master of the post-office, who was the accuser, but the accused M.P. himself.

"Hatfield!" screamed out Miss Howbiggen, as she leaned forward from the carriage window. "Who would possibly have thought it?"

"Oh, very possible, indeed!" replied Mr.

Howbiggen, doggedly; "I told you to take care what new acquaintances you made. I thought this pretended Colonel and M.P. would turn out but dross instead of the 'real metal,' after all. 'Gentleman Hatfield!—he, he, he! You seem surprised," he added with a sneer. "What will he take for his property in Caithness?—he, he!"

"Who was possibly to tell?" replied Miss Howbiggen, with an indignant toss of the head, signifying her unwillingness to admit she had been made a dupe of—"His manners were so perfectly that of a gentleman."

"A gentleman!—he, he!—I thought some such denouement to this 'gentleman-like' farce would exhibit itself sooner or later."

"You could think no such thing, Mr. Howbiggen," replied his sister, pettishly. "If I was deceived, or duped as you term it, (and which you are amused to think that I was,) why, you too were duped as well, and everybody else in the neighbourhood—Mr. Lawton and Laura Lawton—"

"He, he !-poor Lawton !-poor little Laura !
Gentleman' Hatfield !-he, he !"

Thus did the ascetic Howbiggen amuse himself with a topic which others would have regarded with feelings more akin to concern and surprise combined.

During this colloquy between the occupants of

the Howbiggen carriage, Quandish was proceeding to fortify his declaration of the fact that no other than Hatfield was the person who had been passing himself off in the neighbourhood as Colonel Renmore, by challenging all present to hasten at once to the island on the lake, and lay hands on the felon, if there he should prove to be, as he suspected.

A spark of fire alighting on a heap of combustible matter would not have sooner kindled it into a blaze, than the challenge of Quandish kindled the crowd into impatience, at once to proceed and place the impostor in the situation of arrest which had but a moment ago been so unpleasantly occupied by the "real Simon Pure," the real M.P. and Colonel, &c.

This much outraged gentleman had now recovered his calmness and equanimity, being no longer inconvenienced by the pressure of Master Groat's clutch on his shoulder, or of the mob's footsteps at his heels. In fact, knowing the celebrity of character possessed by the arch-impostor who had assumed his name, he was willing to excuse the mistake of the honest village authorities, in demouncing him as they had done. He was softened, moreover, by the apologies that Groat and the postmaster now uttered, as profusely as they had before expressed suspicions and bandied jests, at the expense

of one whom they considered as making much too lame a story to assure them of his innocence.

In fact, the worthy gentleman had stated what they subsequently found to be altogether the truth -namely, that he was one of a party of visitants to the scenery of the lakes. It appears that having had some letters to frank, he had ordered them to be put into the post-office, as he passed down the street on his way to the lake, when the post-office master declared that the Honourable Member had already franked his number, and the letters were accordingly returned. Colonel Renmore immediately remonstrated, and being shewn the letters franked with his name, (specimens of Hatfield's "obligingness," as heretofore witnessed,) he at once declared them a forgery. His story, it is needless to observe, was not credited at the time, and himself was placed in the disagreeable light of an impostor; and hence the source of the uproar that greeted our friends, Mr. and Miss Howbiggen, on their entry into the pretty little town of Keswick.

But all parties were now hastening, like a clamorous brood of waterfowl, to the lake-margin; while Quandish, in his over-eagerness, distancing the rest, pushed off in the only boat that remained, leaving honest Groat, and the crowd of village geese at his heels, cackling aloud their dismay at not being able to embark on the pursuit for which all were so eager; nor could all the oratory of the real M.P. quiet their clamour or appease their dissatisfaction.

"We had hoped to have soused the swindler in the lake," said one.

"I would just as lief souse Measter Quandish for pushing off in this way without me," grumbled out the constable; "he moight ha' waited for me, one should think."

"He will be brought to shore," calmly observed the real Colonel Renmore; "and then you can at once convey him to the magistrate."

"Ay; and you may duck him and Quandish too!" giggled out Mr. Howbiggen, who had now with his sister arrived at the border of the lake, swelling the group of anxious expectants for the capture of the "renowned Hatfield."

" And so we will !" was exclaimed on all sides.

And, cheered by this resolve, the villagers managed to console themselves for the trick they considered Quandish had played them in starting off on the chase, from which they by no means wished to have been so thrown out.

As for Quandish, a philosopher would be induced to remark, that over impatience in pursuing its object too often fails of success, as much by overstepping it as falling short of it. Miss Howbiggen was not a little vexed to see that he had gone off in the only boat there was left, as just mentioned; all the others having been engaged and taken off previously.

"Why, how vexatious! how shall we be able to arrive at the island!—dear, dear!"

"Oh, ma'am," observed Groat to her, "you need not 'fret' much. You are too late a'ready for the flower show and the starting of the regatta. Why, you ought to have been here long ago, bless you."

"Well! if I ever knew anything so vexatious! this is all through your delay, Mr. Howbiggen, in not setting out in proper time!—very vexatious, I must say!"

Mr. Howbiggen, however, sympathized but little in her vexation. On the contrary, so far from apologizing or expressing concern at his own delay and her disappointment, he only increased the provocation already given, by grinning sardonically at her discomfiture. Nay, he repeated his declaration, that this "water frolic" would be the death of him.

." Here am I, kept standing over the damp atmosphere of this water," he said, coughing; "I think it is I who ought to complain more than any one else."

Thus, then, will we leave these good people, with their respective causes of dissatisfaction, standing by the shore, with the mob near them, in expectation of the capture of Hatfield. We will, meantime, place ourselves on the island already specified, in order to observe, with the rest of the spectators on its shore, the movements of the greedy captor, Quandish, who was now rowing might and main to reach it, much to the surprise and marvel of the persons on the island.

"Why, this fellow," observed Mr. Lillynore, "appears as much to be rowing for a prize as any one of the regatta combatants."

"Indeed! so he does!" was the reply; " and talking of the combatants, look, they are coming back, and without Colonel Renmore. He was at their head in the commencement of the race. I expected to see him return so too."

"Indeed, yes; I fancied he would be the winner; and I'm sure," said the young bard, "I wished he might be, for the sake of that lovely creature who acted as his steerswoman; for success in the race depends not a little on the art of the person steering, as well as on that of the rowers. As she sate at the helm, she looked lovely as Circe floating round her own enchanted island."

The surprise expressed here, at Colonel Renmore's being missing from the ranks of the race, was fully participated in by his fellow combatants, who could not imagine what had become of him. For, as we have already shewn, he had been so much a head of them in the outset of the race, that on arriving at the little island which was the "goal" of the race, he had time, unperceived by them, to run his skiff behind it, into the bay of the main shore opposite. Here, then, he had landed, and escaped with the Beauty, while they fancied he had turned the corner of the goal; but on rounding it, they found he had disappeared.

However, they continued rowing on, back to the starting point, and were now fast approaching to the island-shore whence they set out, when old Mike's boat glided in between the course of the racing boats and Quandish's.

"Here's a fellow come to spoil your sport, gentlemen," cried the old man to the foremost combatant in the race; "what if we teach him better manners?"

The word "informer" at the same time escaped the old mariner's lips, accompanied by a significant smile that implied mischief. The word that he had uttered required no further explanation of any accompanying circumstances. The seed of mischief was sown, and old Mike now proceeded to reap the fruit. With two or three strokes of his oar, he had now come between the shore and Quandish's boat.

- " Hah! Master Quandish, is it you?"
- " Make way! make way, man!" cried the im-

patient myrmidon of justice. "This is not a time for trifling. I come to apprehend a--"

But scarcely had the luckless Quandish opened his lips, than the violent concussion of a boat running against his own, knocked him off his seat into the water.

Mike, in fact, after having "hailed" the informer (as we have just witnessed), rapidly shot by him; and then, with all the dexterity of an expert boatman, wheeled his boat round, and with a stroke of his oar in which he centered all his strength, drove his skiff full upon the stern of Quandish's boat, driving it in such a direction that it would be necessarily forced counter to the course of the boats of the rowers, which were now fast approaching the shore at the termination of the race.

This interruption to the proper conclusion of the race called forth cries of disapprobation from the spectators on the shore, at the expense of the luckless Quandish.

"Duck him! Upset his boat! What does he mean by coming in the way and spoiling the race! Duck him!—drown him!"

It is almost needless to observe, that these friendly suggestions from shore were very readily responded to on the part of the baffled rowers, more especially as Mike had communicated to them, as we have already witnessed, the character and vocation of the intruder.

Great, then, was the scene of confusion which now took place in the shallow water of the shelving shore of the island. With a shout of delight, the foremost rower in the race had witnessed Mike's boat "bump" (to use an expression of aquatic racing) the boat of the informer; and not a moment intervened before he, together with his brother rowers, all "bumped" the poor informer's boat in succession, as they arrived at the shore. The luckless subject of this rough discipline having at length, with no small difficulty, scrambled to the land, was assailed on all sides, by the spectators there, for thus spoiling the termination of the race, and by the rowers also, for being not only an intruder on their course, but one of so sordid and vile a character.

It was in vain that the luckless man raised his voice, declaring the importance of the errand on which he had come;—no one of his present audience would listen to him, or give him credence.

The beautiful Duchess, however, in spite of the amusement which the ducking, diving, sousing, and clamour had occasioned, declared still, "that it was very singular that the 'poor man' (as she was charitable enough to style Quandish) should

persist so vehemently in his statement;" which was, that the person who was present a short time past, bearing the name of Colonel Renmore, had assumed a designation to which he had no right.

"At any rate," she added, "what the man says is true, so far—namely, that Colonel Renmore, to whom that name really belongs, is on shore at Keswick. I know this, for he was one of our party."

"Vastly singular l" said Lillynore, humming a French air, "Oh, que c'est une drôle affaire."

The words of the fair Duchess made some little impression, though unaided as yet by any more corroborative proof; but if this were wanting, it was now speedily supplied; and the "mawling" which the unhappy Quandish had undergone was destined to cease when a party of persons, having at length procured boats, now landed on the island from the Keswick strand.

These persons were the real Colonel Renmore, the post-master, and the constable; and this réunion of parties took up little time in making the conclusion plain;—namely, that Quandish's story was true, and that the Duchess's doubts were too well founded. Herself and every one else were intent on the account given of his singular arrest at the post-office, by the real Colonel Renmore. The tale, too, was illustrated at once, and further corroborated, by the interesting "by-play" of Miss

Howbiggen, who, now, together with her brother, had also joined their forces to those on the island.

The result of the whole explanation of these singular events was, instantly to set forth, on the part of Quandish and the constable, in pursuit of the "pseudo" Colonel Renmore. Accordingly, these two worthies placed themselves in a boat to commence their voyage of discovery.

"Which way had we better steer?" inquired the constable.

"Ask old Mike—he is the man," observed a stander by.

Quandish sullenly observed, "You may ask him if you will; but," (he would have added,) "I know he would rather cover the retreat of the fugitive than discover it." However, he did not give expression to his thoughts, considering that the ancient mariner might possibly betray to others, under the inducement of a bribe, perhaps, what he would not discover to himself.

The base spirit of the "informer" miscalculated the disposition of good old Mike, and formed an opinion too much suited to his own taste; but not, therefore, (as he supposed,) conformable to the more generous spirit of Mike.

The constable, however, being laudably willing to save himself as much trouble in his investigation as he could, exerted his lungs as loudly as the best of those whose chorus of bawling now demanded, "Where is old Mike?"

Echo, as the poet has it, might indeed answer "where?" for Mike was not present to answer for himself. In vain they called, and clamoured, and looked for him.

Furtively as he had first of all glided into view upon the surface of the lake, so had he now as suddenly and furtively disappeared from it; and the stalwart constable, with his vindictive comrade, Quandish, were accordingly left to pursue their voyage of discovery as their sagacity might best guide them.

Honest Groat, the village constable, was, in the estimation of Quandish, but a poor substitute for the more experienced myrmidons of the metropolitan police, which were lurking at Keswick, ready to start on the track of the fugitive. It was Quandish's intention, then, if he did not speedily glean some tidings of the course Renmore (for so the circumstances of our story will oblige us to call him a little while longer) had taken, to return to Keswick and avail himself of the aid of these better satellites of justice. In the present emergency, however, he was resolved to make the best of the services of Master Groat.

Such, then, were the singular events of the day's festivity. They afforded ample theme for discussion and speculation to the whole neighbourhood of Keswick—Buttermere in particular—for months on months after. Every other topic of "gossipry" in Miss Howbiggen's circle was absorbed in this sole and engrossing one—" How Gentleman Hatfield' had run off with the Beauty."

As for the Duchess and her cortège, they pursued their route the next morning, with the exception of the "real" Colonel Renmore, who remained behind at Keswick, in order to be on the spot to give his evidence in the "frankforging" affair, with a view to the committal for trial of Hatfield, in case the pursuers of this "difficult prey" should be successful in apprehending him. So, until we meet her lovely and benevolent Grace again, in the future events of our story, we bid her—farewell.

CHAPTER XIV.

"One moment these were heard;—another
Past; and the two who stood beneath that light,
Each only heard, or saw, or felt the other."
SHELLEY.

The echoes of the laughter-shout that arose

with such seeming earnestness, as he ran his boat by the side of yours and leaned over to speak to you?" asked Gertrude.

"Nothing, love; except that he recommended me to snatch the opportunity of quitting my rivals in the race at a spot so favourable as that where we landed."

"Good old man!—he could not have been more willing to further our escape if Quandish himself had been haunting our way."

"Which," observed Renmore to himself, "was unfortunately the case!" and then raising his voice, continued, "You say truly, dear Gertrude; we owe much indeed to old Mike, if it were only for the interest he has so constantly shewn in our cause, against the jealousy and insidious hypocrisy of our common enemy. But yet more, he has—" and here Renmore paused, as his voice hesitated.

"Has what, dear William?" (his real Christian name was James,) inquired Gertrude, eagerly, as she pressed the arm of her lover on which she leaned to her own.

"Why, if you must know, Gertrude, the purport of Mike's communication to me in the boat was precisely of the nature you suggested in your last remark."

"Was, then, Quandish on our track-trying to

prevent our escape? Were we felons, he could not trace us more eagerly in the endeavour to capture us!"

" Felons !" thought her companion, with a feeling that bespoke he was too conscious of the justice of the remark as applied in his own instance; but he continued, giving it a different complexion-"Felons, indeed, you may say! and little better does he regard us as being, since he considers that you have stolen away his peace! and that I, a yet happier 'felon,' have stolen away you!" and he pressed her hand as he spoke, and smiled; while he continued, with characteristic artfulness, and in a tone of gaiety that completely diverted her mind from any inkling of suspicion as regarded design on his part-"It would be a pity, really, not to carry through this game of mocking the hypocritepreacher, since we have begun it so well! What do you suppose he is on our track for? or wasfor I hope he has found himself baffled in his pursuit. Why,--"

"To try and take me back to Buttermere?" interposed Gertrude, innocently.

"To be sure!" continued her lover, plausibly.
"Of course, his object would be to take you away
(if he could) from me, on the authority of your
mother's name and direction, and place you at
Buttermere again. Now, it has occurred to me,

that as possibly he may track us to Lorton, and inquire for you and me too at Mr. Fenton's, it will be as well to let the domestics remain in ignorance of my name—'Renmore;' and as to offering another in its place—why, if any one asks for me—or inquires if any gentleman has been at the house—they may give in answer, the name of 'Smith, Jones, Stubbs, Jenkins, Green, Brown, White, Williams,' or any of the extensive catalogue of those commoner names, they please!" and he laughed as he spoke.

"Indeed, yes; it is a good precaution!" replied the unsuspecting Beauty, smiling.

"As for Mr. Fenton, he will, of course, not be willing to give any information about our being, or having been, under his roof, to this Quandish, whose application he cannot but consider as so much impertinence. It is in him we place confidence; and well acquainted as he is with the reasons, as regards yourself, of our seeking refuge under his protection, of all persons he would repel this Quandish, whose malignant character he cannot but feel an abhorrence for. I trust, however, we shall have been united beyond the power of Quandish or any one else to separate us, before this miscreant can come up with us, or find us at Mr. Fenton's. So much as we have the start of him, I have little doubt we shall be on our way from

Lorton to seek a happy refuge in the north of Scotland, or abroad somewhere, ere any pursuit can reach us. Therefore, as to Mr. Fenton, no disguise of my name is necessary—or if, indeed, I did adopt one, he would readily consider me as justified in doing so."

"I'm sure he would; for much did it concern him to hear from me the continued vexation I have endured from this man—this Quandish—and the stratagems I was obliged to exercise, in self-defence, to evade coming in contact with him. But when I see him, he shall yet more be made acquainted with the outrage of yesterday, which renders my present step not only justifiable, but necessary for my safety."

So spoke the Beauty, in reply to her lover's plausible representations. Little did she dream, when he suggested to her, with so much dexterity—so much well-guarded and dissembled reserve—that Quandish might still possibly be in pursuit of them, how much more might have been imparted concerning the cause of such pursuit—how much more, too, might have been added as to the nature of Mike's communication. For the old man had, at the time he told him to "fly for his life," whispered to him, in a few brief and hasty words, the circumstances that had just been occurring at the post-office, some little time previously to Quandish's setting out on the pursuit.

It has been already shewn how faithfully old Mike had performed his promise of taking care of his beautiful charge, and yielding her to our hero in the morning as appointed. It should seem that, subsequently to this, he had crossed over to the Keswick, or eastern shore, and having been made acquainted with the circumstance at the post-office, as just mentioned, instantly launched his skiff, and darted, as we have seen, to the side of Renmore's boat, conveying him the fearful intelligence of the peril in which he stood.

Little, indeed, could Gertrude have imagined on what a precipice of danger her lover had been "sporting" (literally) at the moment of the old man's communication. She had now been made acquainted by him, in his usual plausible and dexterous manner, that the object of her disgust and dread was possibly still seeking them out,-but for how different a reason to the real one! Had even Quandish come up with them, and uttered the whole accusation of which he was conscious, against her lover, yet so malign had she experienced his character and disposition, that she would have willingly considered his criminations as so many outbursts of a rancorous and revengeful spirit. On the other hand, when she turned from the malignant man and baffled suitor, what would she not believe in favour of him in whose behalf love

pleaded (so deservedly, as she felt) to her heart! All that hate could have urged against him would scarcely prevail.

Often did Hatfield, or Renmore, look back on his track, to see if he could descry any persons on horseback or foot, apparently in pursuit; but no cause of alarm presented itself; and in fact, it is not difficult to suppose, that without any certain guide as to the direction taken by the fugitive, the pursuers were at fault, or on a wrong scent.

Cheered by this consideration, our hero urged on towards Lorton, his heart beating anxiously for the successful issue of his flight thither; while Gertrude's beat in unison with his own, as far as regarded the object of their union, though utterly unconscious of the further motive which animated her lover's feelings. He had expressed to her, as we have lately seen, the expediency of their instantly, after their union, hastening from the neighbourhood, to Scotland or France, or some other distant place of abode, for the obvious reason, as far as he suggested, of her not encountering her parent's displeasure; while the securing his own life was the fearful warning his conscience tacitly whispered to himself.

Onward, then, they fled. The mountainmaiden's knowledge of the wild regions through which they hurried as fast as the difficulty of the way would permit, was of infinite service in

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expediting the progress of herself and our hero; for the village of Lorton, which, by the direct road from Keswick, was a distance at least of eight or ten miles, was reduced to less than half that extent by the by-paths, the devious lanes, through copses, and the chasms of rocks, by which the lovers went. It was consequently not much more than one hour and a half from the period of their issuing from the boat on the bank of Derwentwater, that they now discerned the grey spire of Lorton church, peeping forth above the sombre elms and Scotch firs with which the village was surrounded; while conspicuous in a place by itself, rose the venerable yewtree, " " pride of Lorton vale," as the poet justly terms it.

" A happy omen," cried Renmore, as he pointed out the spire to Gertrude, - "a happy omen again, dear Gertrude. It is the same object that shewed itself on our first meeting on Melbreak; and it is the first object that now greets us on

^{*} The Lorton yew-tree, celebrated by Wordsworth, and that also in Patterdale church-yard, are considered the largest in dimensions in England, except perhaps the Ankerwyke yew near Staines. This last is said to have been in existence in the time of King John. Norbury Park, near Leatherhead, contains a number of enormous yew-trees, called by Fuseli, the "Grove of the Furies." But the Borrodaile yews, called by Wordsworth "the Fraternal Four," are the most remarkable for their effect, aided so much as it is by their peculiar advantages of situation.

approaching this spot of our looked-for union. That sacred spire seems as it were a finger raised by Heaven (or fate, as our friend Mike would say) to beckon us to the spot where our vows are to be solemnized, our truth consecrated, and the struggle we have made to secure this happiness at length rewarded."

Gertrude smiled and pressed Renmore's hand, as he continued hastily,—" And now the first thing to be done is for you to proceed to your friend and guardian, Mr. Fenton, and apprise him of the object of your visit."

"Without you, must I go?"

"I will follow you immediately. Why that look of distrust, dear Gertrude? Can you doubt that I shall not keep my word? You might as well doubt my affection for you. But consider, you are well acquainted with Mr. Fenton, and have already opened your heart to him on this subject. I have never yet seen—that is—I am unacquainted with him," he continued, in a voice that betokened the emotion he had already evinced on former occasions on this subject; "it is better, then, for you to present yourself to him in the first instance. You are as a child of his own,—but I—I——"

And here he was overcome for a moment by the struggle that secretly agitated him, but which was too sincere to awaken any feelings of a mistrustful nature in Gertrude's mind, as she looked at him with mingled concern and affection, while she replied, as she thought she detected a tear swelling in his eye—

"And are you, indeed, so unacquainted with Mr. Fenton, and yet speak of him with so much affection on all occasions when his name is mentioned?"

"Yes, love, yes!—but go, we have no time to lose. Be assured, I will not delay long before I come to ask you at his hands; for he, dearest, shall give you away to me. Hasten, love; believe me, I shall be too impatient to come and claim you—doubly dear to me, when I take you under the sanction and from the hands of Mr. Fenton. But you are the person to prepare him in the first instance; for my presenting myself to him, stranger as I am—. So, hasten, love! hasten to his residence!"

He embraced her as he spoke; and then turning down a pathway that led round the village, he looked back and saw her proceeding in the direction of the parsonage-house.

Being left to himself, many thoughts crowded on his mind, the foremost amongst which was the imminent risk he had run of apprehension while sharing the festivities of Derwentwater.

"What!" he exclaimed, "and so my assumed name has at length found a claimant to dispute it

with me. Well, I trust before the report can transpire to this out-of-the-way spot, Gertrude will be mine, and both of us far away from the reach of danger! The plague of this man-this Renmore, whose name I had assumed,-coming from abroad, as he must have done, at this moment-and to this spot of all others in the world! He was an invalid in the south of Italy not long ago, and no one knew anything of him here. Unfortunate fellow that I am ! to think he should have thus unexpectedly returned! Had I imagined such an event, I would have adopted some other nom de guerre. It can't be helped. I have the start of my enemies. By to-morrow, ere the sun has mounted far on his course, I trust Gertrude and myself will be one. No one knows our track. It is now growing lateves, I will trust that before pursuit can find us out or reach us, Mr. Fenton will have united us, and seen us depart. And then will we hasten from the spot-she secure in my love, I may with truth sayand I secure in her love, and-her fortune! For. little though it is, it will be sufficient for us to live on-to keep me from the necessity of any dangerous expedients; and in a foreign land I may vet hope (as I have told her) to pass many happy vears with her. And now for Mr. Fenton's house." As he spoke his heart beat violently. Nay, there was, as we have witnessed, (in the

outset even of these pages,)—there was some secret clue to the affections of our hero possessed by Fenton, which (from whatever cause it might be) had agitated him no less strongly than his regard for Gertrude herself.

From the first moment he had taken refuge in the district in which we have found him, he had constantly maintained a conflict with himself, as regarded his wish, and yet hesitation, to see this worthy clergyman. But the trial was at length to be made; and even the thought of Gertrude for awhile gave way to that of his first meeting with Fenton—her adopted father, as he may be indeed considered.

Accordingly, he proceeded to the parsonage-house. It was situate near the church, and built of a sort of red sandstone, which will be called to mind by the reader who has witnessed the material of which Carlisle and Durham cathedrals are constructed. Its style of architecture was the somewhat heavy one of the first and second Georges,—namely, square, and full of windows, exhibiting a melancholy and ungainly contrast to the interesting character of the Elizabethan style that had heretofore prevailed. During the turbid reign of the first Charles, demolition had been the order of the day, as far as regards ecclesiastical edifices; and the reparation of these, according to the original

models, marked the period of the Restoration, more than constructions of any new character. When novelty ensued, it was disfigurement.

However, if the style of the Lorton parsonagehouse was not precisely that on which it was most interesting to look, yet its ungainliness was veiled or disguised by the thick and rich mantle of verdure with which the creepers of varied hue and beauty invested its walls. Their arms rambled on all sides, as it were, to meet each other, and then finished their race, hand in hand, as they stretched together over the roof-top. The very chimneys were twined with their ivy wreath, as a Mænad's spear; and the luxuriance of the hop on one side was mingled with many a tint of green, darker and lighter, on the other, of jasmine and clematis, starred as their foliage was with the blossoms that spangled them.

It was on the outside of the wicket which opened on the walk leading to the porch of the house, that our hero stood. His heart,—not only on account of his betrothed, but actuated by some deep and secret feeling, as regarded Fenton,—urging him to enter; while his step hesitated, as though held back by the painful struggle of indecision, grief, and uncertainty, of which he was conscious.

His hand was on the latch—he raised it—he let it fall again—and wandered along by the side of the ample wall of verdure formed by the thick privet hedge which flanked the premises. At length he paused, and stamping his foot as though he had overcome the struggle that had been battling within him, he exclaimed—

"I must, I will see him! Heaven alone knows how the circumstances in which I am placed will terminate; and before I—I should wish to—I must see him!"

So saying, he retraced his steps to the wicket, and raising the latch, he opened it, and advanced under an arched trellis work, roofed with the tendrils of the scarlet-runner, sweet-pea, and chinarose, till his foot was now on the step of the entrance door. He rang, when who should meet his eyes, as the door was opened, but Gertrude. Her presence was a relief to him under the present tumult of his mind.

"My dear Gertrude!" he exclaimed, as she answered eagerly, her eyes sparkling with satisfaction at seeing him—"I have mentioned all to Mr. Fenton. He guessed, from my previous mention of the engagement between us, the nature of my present visit, before the words had escaped me. I then left him, and have been watching for your approach."

"And have I been long?" he asked with a smile; and she was just about to reply, when her words were interrupted by the entry from his study of the good Fenton himself. He advanced with a benign and paternal air, holding out his hand to the plighted husband of Gertrude, as though he were meeting a son; for, as may be readily supposed, he had been in no small degree prepossessed by her in Renmore's favour. Nor less did our hero on his part greet Fenton as a father; and the air of respect and reverence with which he acknowledged the good curate's greeting was tempered with a yet kindlier expression, more akin to affection.

Gertrude, on the sudden appearance of Fenton, had retired, while the latter proceeded to address himself to Renmore, "I have been talking to my fair pupil and friend (for she has informed you of our long acquaintance) of the relation in which she stands with yourself, Sir; and as I feel a real interest in her happiness, regarding her as I do, almost as my own child, you may suppose I must also feel no trifling degree of interest in the person who is about to take her to his bosom for life, under the sacred auspices of the church."

Renmore bowed, and was about to utter some remark, when Mr. Fenton proceeded—

"You would therefore oblige me by letting me have a moment's conversation with you, before we fix the time at which the ceremony shall take place." So saying, he led Renmore into the little study from which he had come, and having motioned him to take a chair, he took a seat himself, opposite his guest. As he sate silent a few moments, with his eyes bent downwards, Renmore had an opportunity of contemplating that venerable countenance, and that fine scope of forehead, that would have made a study for a Domenichino. The countenance bore marks of much, and perhaps painful thought; but a look of benevolence overspread it—benevolence for others, which never permitted itself to be overcome by a selfish fretfulness about individual causes of complaint.

The thin grey locks floated over the forehead, and a tear forced itself into the eye of Renmore, as he sate gazing on the countenance of the venerable person before him, either from associations it inspired, or possibly, recollections—it might be so,—yes, recollections which he was anxious to express—communications he was desirous to unfold, though he dreaded entering on the disclosure.

His eye glanced from the good man's brow to the portrait of a female whose eye seemed bent on him, and to follow him on whichever side he looked at it. He had met it on entering the room. It followed him as he had crossed from the door to the seat he now occupied, and it rested on him now. The countenance was one of the mildest expres-

sion, indicative of a disposition worthy of the person who was the partner in life of so excellent a man as Fenton. In a word, it was the portrait of his late wife. She had died many years ago, and it was said, left her husband childless.

Renmore thought that the mild look of that portrait bore in it a mingled expression of sorrow and gentle reproach. It was thus his fancy or feeling interpreted; but how far his reflections might have led him, or from what secret sources they borrowed their peculiar complexion on the present occasion, it is not yet in our power to explain: whatever they might be, they were now broken off by Fenton's addressing him as follows:

"This young female," said the venerable man, looking in turn intently at our hero, "has placed the most implicit reliance on you, and tells me she believes that no difference of station could ever make you forgetful of the claim she will soon have on your tenderness and protection, or render you indifferent to her after the first possession of her. You know what the world is, Colonel Renmore; you know how little men of your rank in life value the feelings of others when their own caprices or interest operate on them."

"Indeed this is too often the case, my dear Sir, interposed Renmore, "but I trust not universally so."

"I am willing to agree with you, and am far from considering that so painful a charge is universally applicable; but how many instances have I known of men of rank marrying, under a strong impulse of passion, females much beneath their own grade in society, and subsequently repenting of their weakness and precipitancy."

"True, indeed!"

"And what has been the consequence? that they have indemnified themselves in the most unjust and cruel way,—I mean, by shewing every unkindness and harshness to the unhappy object of their former interest, who has now become loathsome in their eyes, as being a clog on their happiness or ambition, which they now in vain strive to shake off. Excuse me, then, for inquiring of you, if you have in charity and honour well considered the step you are about to take."

"I have duly considered," replied Renmore;
"and feel more and more satisfied with the conclusion to which I have come, the more I consider
of it. I feel, that so far from being likely to exhibit any of the caprice you so conscientiously
suggest, I shall be bound more and more to the
object of an affection that increases in her presence," (and here, indeed, he spoke with sincerity.)

"Besides," he continued, "Gertrude, independently of her personal attractions, has superior

qualifications, compared with those in her walk in life, in consequence of the training her mind has received, as she has informed me, from one so well calculated to inspire it with all that is good and generous—yourself."

The good curate bowed his head in acknowledgment of Renmore's kindly testimony of his early good will and care of Gertrude, while he replied, that nature had largely endowed her, independently of any moral training she might have received from him.

"And now," continued Renmore, "let us proceed to the happier theme—the hour of the ceremony. It shall be to-morrow at eight o'clock: that will be a period before any idle, vacant people, who have nothing to do but busy themselves in the concerns of others, are abroad; and it will be more agreeable, both to my own feelings and those of Gertrude, that the ceremony shall take place as privately as possible."

"At eight o'clock, then, to-morrow, Colonel, I shall be waiting to perform the service at the altar of God, who I hope may bless your marriage. And now let me unfold to you a secret relating to your bride, with which even Gertrude herself is not yet made acquainted, and which I feel it due to you to impart. It is the more due, I may add, since it presents itself as a reward to a person of

your distinguished station in life, for putting aside all discrepancy of rank, and loving an excellent female for herself and her virtues."

"What is it you can have to inform me that I do not know of Gertrude? I am all attention."

"That she is the daughter of the late Lord G-," (which confirms what has been heretofore hinted by Dr. Esdaile to our hero, in an earlier stage of our story.) "Her mother, dame Wetherby as she is commonly called, had been in his lordship's household for many years, and when he married, she retired and was placed in possession of the pretty hostelrie and farm attached to it at Buttermere, where she was further married to an old faithful domestic of Lord G--. Gertrude was so interesting a child that his lordship, in one of his visits to her mother, determined on having her educated, and was pleased to fix on myself for the performance of that duty. I took a real pleasure in forming the mind and strengthening the reason of my lovely little pupil, and was happy to see that she had sensibilities and a disposition well worthy of the attention and care I bestowed on her. She would follow the man on whom she bestowed her affections," continued Fenton, with increased animation, "through all hazards and perils of life and the world,-ay, even to death itself-were such his lot !"

[&]quot;To death!" mentally ejaculated Renmore.

"She is, in truth, of an exalted spirit, no less than of a pure and innocent mind. But to continue the story of her parentage and education. It was Lord G-'s wish to see her well established in marriage before he died, but this wish was frustrated by his decease some years ago. Since that period, Gertrude has been to me almost as a child of my own. It was the desire of his lordship that the secret of her birth should not be revealed until the event of her marriage, when it was to be imparted to her husband; and I was earnestly requested to exercise my authority in directing her to listen to no proposals that were not calculated to secure her happiness. The property her mother holds, you are already aware, no doubt, will be Gertrude's at her death. The old man who passed as her father had always suspected the circumstance of Gertrude's real paternity, though he had been led to believe, at the time of his marriage with her mother, that she was Mrs. Wetherby's child by a former marriage. This old man she always tended till his death, not long ago, with a care and affection truly filial, and which made up to him for the slights and neglect which her mother often shewed him, in consequence of a certain disgust conceived towards her lowly partner, after having been flattered by the more distinguished attentions of Lord G--."

"Yes!" interposed Renmore, "I have heard

something of this good woman's bearing towards her late husband; and, I may add, that if she had bestowed a little more kindness towards her lovely daughter, it would not have been amiss."

"You do not, then," continued Fenton, "wed a person of ignoble blood, or ungenerous stock, in Gertrude, and I am sure that now you have heard the claims she has on my care and guardianship, you will excuse the expression of that anxiety which it is natural for me—nay, incumbent on me—to feel and evince in her behalf. What I have imparted to you relative to her parentage you can disclose to her whenever you please, or I can do so in the course of the present evening. So come! let us now join her."

So saying, Fenton rose from his seat, but observing that his companion appeared to have something to impart, he inquired of him if such were the case.

"No—nothing—" replied Renmore, hesitatingly, and with an emotion that shewed there was
something labouring in his bosom, of which he
would have wished to disburden it. We may
readily imagine that it was connected with that
secret of his uneasiness, as regarded the subject of
Fenton and himself, by which we have at different
times witnessed him so deeply agitated, throughout
the course of our story. But whatever this secret

may have been, however desirous he was to reveal it, certain it is that, whether from considerations that it might convey too great a shock at this moment to Fenton—or that a fitting opportunity was not yet arrived for revealing it—the secret remained locked in his bosom, and after stammering out one or two incoherent words, he left the dangerous ground on which he had essayed to set foot, as he spoke thus—

"No, no, really nothing! I had nothing in particular—some other time—in fact, I had forgotten."

"Surely you must have something to impart? Was it anything relative to Gertrude?"

Renmore readily snatched at this thought, to relieve himself of the embarrassment which the dark subject, whatever it was on, which his thoughts wandered, had occasioned him,—as he hastily replied, as if calling to mind suddenly something he had forgotten—

"Relative to Gertrude—oh! by-the-bye—yes—it is merely to say that after my union with her, I shall remove her altogether from this neighbour-hood, since she is so little likely to meet with any countenance from her parent. In fact, I need scarcely remark, that you are fully aware from how much perplexity her alliance and removal with me will save her."

Fenton assented to this representation, which was offered with all our hero's plausibility of manner, and was expressed with a view to excusing any precipitancy in his intended departure with Gertrude, after the ceremony of their nuptials was concluded.

And now they rejoined the fair object of these remarks, while Fenton, as he entered the room where she was awaiting them, said to her with more than wonted affection—

"Come, my dear child!—come to my arms!—come to the arms of one you not unjustly call your father! And let me have the happiness of giving you to one who I am sure has a heart to love you, and be true to you and his present affection."

And so saying, he pressed the Beauty to his heart, and imprinted a kiss on her lovely forehead, as he parted the rich auburn tresses that had strayed from their snood, as she bent down her brow on the good man's bosom. He parted those locks with the sacred tenderness of a loving parent, and kissed her brow, as he said, through the tears that rose—

"Heaven bless you, my lovely child; long guard you, and bless you, and give you happiness with this estimable gentleman."

So saying, he took Renmore's hand and placed it in Gertrude's, as he turned aside his face, and dashed away the tears that found vent.

Renmore could not witness the good curate's emotion without being himself in no small degree moved, as certain compunctious visitings besieged him with respect to the part he was now playing, and was about to carry so far; but their whisperings were speedily drowned by the all-controlling voice of that passion, which if it was an infatuation. yet was as sincerely as it was deeply felt, and which called for the possession of Gertrude. Though the struggle in his breast was transient, it was no less violent, as the meeting of his lips and her own ratified the approval of Fenton. Those lips were chill-chill,-but from what different causes! Her's, from excess of deep and sacred passion,-that excess in which the warm life's blood ran back to its fountain, and left the lovely cheek pale in the intensity of her feeling :- his, from the chill in which its darker thoughts transiently subdued the heart, as it shuddered at circumstances which he dreaded might blast the dream of happiness - circumstances more painful, more perplexing from the very uncertainty with which his destiny was haunted.

But the evening was now far spent—it was time to retire; and the melancholy chime of the village church clock pealed forth its warning of the lateness of the hour, as Renmore, or rather Hatfield, now retired, in order to take up his quarters for the night at the village inn. Gertrude remained under the roof of Fenton.

"To-morrow, then, at eight, Colonel Renmore," said the clergyman, as he saw his companion out at the garden wicket where they parted; while his words were answered, or rather echoed back, by our hero, in a sunken and tremulous voice—

"To-morrow at eight."

CHAPTER XV.

"Knock! knock! 'ith' name of Beelzebub, who's knocking so at the gate!"

MACBETH.

THE first ruddy streaks of dawn, as they stole over the grey vault of heaven, where the stars were growing fewer and more faint, witnessed Renmore, or Hatfield, abroad, watching the progress of daybreak. There are few men, however guilty, that have not their redeeming traits; and it is but justice to the character before us, to record the bitterness of that compunctious struggle which now again assailed him with increased power, as the time drew nearer and nearer when he was to seal Gertrude's fate in his own.

Fevered and exhausted, he had sallied forth after a sleepless night, impelled along by the restlessness that disturbed his spirit. "Shall I bring her to shame?" he thought. "Shall I involve the innocent, confiding girl in my own too probable ruin? Is it not better to distress her by now taking flight—
now that there is an opportunity for doing so, and
then afterwards write to explain everything, while
I sue for her pardon and Fenton's? Is it not
better to do this than let her know when it is too
late what brand rests on the name of her—"

He shuddered at the thought, as he paused and stood uncertain whether to fly or not. He advanced down the hill towards the lane that led into the high road; and then he paused again, as yet other thoughts, and of a more encouraging character, now arose forcibly in his mind.

"Shall I, then," he continued, "at this last step, when I am just about to obtain all I have been so long striving to effect, shrink from my resolution? Pride and shame forbid me to do so. Where are all those cheering hopes, of hastening with Gertrude beyond the reach of danger and my enemies ?-of recompensing myself by this happy result, for a life of hazard and duplicity? Are they all so soon lost?-lost at the moment when they ought to be borne the most strongly in mind? Shall I thus devise plans, and then shrink in the execution of them? Shall I thus desert myself? Is it not enough that a whole world is arrayed against me, and shall I further thus punish myself? Weak and unworthy conclusion! I will be true rather to myself. I will turn back. I will not shrink from my long and fondly cherished resolves. Pride and shame, I say again, forbid it. And the thought, too, consoles me as regards her, which whispers that should I be overtaken by the danger which I too justly apprehend, yet she will not be without succour or consolation. Fenton—the good, the forbearing, the forgiving—he will not be untrue to her, because she has been true to me! Whatever may befal to discredit me—yet her interests will still be dear to him—she will yet be comforted and protected."

And from this last reflection he seemed to draw much consolation. Every thought of self was merged in the stronger and dearer one of Gertrude. As regarded himself, he desired not life; death, indeed, were happiness. It was for her he desired to live.

Accordingly, reanimated by the assurance this reflection gave him, he summoned up, once again, confidence in his spirit, and an appearance at least of cheerfulness in his brow. Once again was he able to look with something like a sense of gratification at the rejoicing aspect of morn, which had so lately shone but in mockery for him! Once again he looked more resolutely on the face of day, from which he had but now shrunk! Resolutely looked he, even as he did in the less-encouraging face of Fate itself!

The scene was indeed one of grandeur and beauty, and of whose charm the most clouded and harassed spirit could scarcely be insensible. That singular and beautiful aspect of the heavens witnessed sometimes in the east just before sunrise now presented itself to his view, though speedily to vanish.

A curtain, as it were, of various colours,—woven by the sublime skill that made all things,—spread itself in the radiance of violaceous, crystalline, sapphire, croceous, and emerald hues, over the couch from which the Day-god was soon about to rise. Anon, drawn back by an invisible hand, that dædal curtain slowly and majestically was moved aside—the colours disappeared—and the rejoicing Monarch-luminary, now rose and beamed in splendour on all created things. Up sped he on his course of majestic ovation, as the Roman bard has described it, and as Guido's pencil has portrayed.*

As Renmore, then, with feelings thus once again more tranquillized, looked around him on a scene of so much splendour and gladness, he was con-

^{*} The reader will remember the sublime design of Guido in illustration of the following lines:—

[&]quot;Quadrijugis invectus equis, Sol aureus exit Lucifer antevolat."

strained to feel that the world possessed blessings it were yet well to live for! The sun-ray that streamed over the hill, awaking all life and nature to gladness, reached to his heart; and like the Persian of old, touched with devout rapture, he exclaimed, though addressing his orisons to a more supreme source than the ancient sun-worshipper—

"Oh, God! forgive me! spare me—for her sake, not for my own!—for her sake—the pure, the innocent!" And the tear stole down his cheek, while his knee involuntarily bowed it, as the words escaped him.

While he was yet thus absorbed, a light step that scarcely brushed away the dews, advanced towards him; and before he was aware of her presence, a fair form stood near him, and met him with a smile as he rose from his meditation.

At first, being as yet under the influence of the thoughts with which he had sought to propitiate Heaven, he could scarcely help imagining, at the moment, that some angel stood before him, as a happy assurance that his prayer had not been unheeded. But though that face was lovely—that brow pure and radiant enough—that form sufficiently airy for even a spirit—yet in those features he recognised his own lovely Gertrude, and her presence brought him to himself. He caught her in his arms, and pressed her lips to his

own, while he held her for awhile in his em-

"I was offering a prayer to Heaven for our happiness, dear Gertrude, when you came upon me!" he said. "Your heart joins with mine in that prayer! I consider your presence at this moment a token that Heaven itself gives you to me! and here I receive you in the face of the mighty Giver's throne, these magnific realms of earth, those heavens of splendour—to whose dread and mystic spirit I have been pouring forth my orisons of joy, and awe, and gratitude!"

He was silent a moment, as he clasped her again to his heart; and though he spoke not, yet his lips moved, as if uttering some fervent words of hope and entreaty, while his eye looked to Heaven in supplication.

This being past, he left the theme, and walking along, with his hand clasped in hers, he said—

"And how comes it, love, that you found out my wanderings at this early hour, and followed my steps hither?"

"I was awake at daybreak; and not being able to sleep, I walked out to look at the carnations I had set for Mr. Fenton, when I was last at his house, and was willing to pass the time in this occupation, till——"

And here a blush overspread her cheeks, and vol. II. P

the smile played on her lips as Renmore took up her words—

"Well, love; till that happy hour which shall make us one? Ah, let us see! the time advances," he added, as he took out his watch; "there is an hour and a quarter yet to elapse. Well, love, as you were busy with your carnations—"

"I happened to turn my eyes in the direction of the hill overlooking the village, and seeing some one moving up its slope, I thought it might possibly be yourself, as you are so early a riser."

"And so you came to meet me! I thank you, love!—I thank you from my heart: every moment passed with you is precious." And here he became silent for awhile, his mind being again transiently assailed with melancholy forebodings, that it was possible they might be parted sooner than either of them would wish. She looked at him inquiringly as she observed—

"I hope we shall pass many moments, hours, days, years, together! Why should we not?"

"There's no reason at all, love—no reason at all!" he replied. "But if we were to pass moments, hours, days, years, together,—multiplied on each other,—that would not render one atom of the time less precious to me, my beauty."

And he now conversed with her in the unrestrained cheerfulness which was usual with him, and in that confiding interchange of thought—graver or gayer—in which he had passed many an hour's ramble with Gertrude before. He seemed more than ever to take interest and pleasure in the present moments he passed with her, perhaps because he felt they might possibly be the last, (such was the uncertainty of his perilous destiny,) and hence the more precious; at any rate, if not the last in time, they might be the last in happiness.

In this manner the hour was beguiled: time quickly winged its way. They were summoned from the spot where they were by the church-clock of the village, which chimed the quarter to eight. Oh! how its sounds thrilled the heart of Renmore, with a sense of anxiety more than joy; but he drowned it. Already the good priest had repaired to the church, to array himself in his sacerdotal robes for the sacred solemnity.

Gertrude repaired to his house, to make such slight preparation as was alone needful, where no pomp, no ceremonial, had existence. The pure joy of her heart was her best hymeneal, the light of her brow her best decoration, the treasure of her charms her richest dowry. The bridegroom paced up and down anxiously through the avenue of yews,* beneath whose sepulchral branches the

These do not include the celebrated "Lorton yew" of which notice has been already taken in the previous chapter.

church porch was approached. He needed not now to have any gloomy associations awakened in his mind; he would gladly have had his path flowered with roses, as if to light the spark of one brighter, one gladder, thought to lure him from the menaces of death and doom which Mike's warning on the lake had so lately apprised him of, as impending a little more closely than might be convenient. He longed with impatience, therefore, to have the ceremony over, and be on his way with Gertrude, beyond the reach of the pursuit that might possibly be too near.

Turning abruptly away from the grove of gloom, (for those sepulchral yews would have formed a meet trysting place for the Furies) he wandered now outside the cemetery, by a fairer path. No one was less a prey to superstition than our hero, as his friend Mike would upbraidingly attest; but still his present equivocal condition did not assuredly require any additional cause for distasteful reflections.

Misfortune, if it "subdues the mind," as Shakspeare expresses it, and hence renders it a prey to superstitious bodings, in the absence of any real and substantial succour, had no such effect on Renmore. The source of his spirit-stir was the uncertainty that still perplexed him with its constantly shifting lights and shadows. He was subjected to the most trying sensation the spirit of man can be assailed with, and the perplexity and irritation of which is a yet severer infliction than any certainty itself of evil or harm! The "certainty of danger," said we?—Let it but shew its face plainly, and no longer skulking in its ambush, and then the daring character of our hero exhibits itself in all that cool presence of mind, that confidence in self, which made him smile in the face of opposition—that adroitness, at once, and determination of enterprise, that distinguished him. If we have heretofore witnessed this in his various encounters with his arch enemy, Quandish, we may yet further have to witness it through wilder and sterner trials.

He wandered then, now, outside the cemetery, by the sweet-briar hedge which skirted it, and which, starred as it was with the dog-rose, white brionyflower, and honey-suckle blossom, sent forth a grateful odour, and presented fairer images to the mind, of rural charm and contented being, amid the paths such flowers decorate.

But he started now amidst his musings, as the sound of steps and rustling of female gear were heard in the lane that approached the spot, while the clock at length chimed the wished-for summons for his repairing to church. The steps that approached were those of Gertrude and an aged

dame that followed her from the parsonage house, in which she was a domestic. The bridegroom—
"the bridegroom of fate," we may term him—and his destined bride, entered the holy porch together; and here her foot chanced to stumble as she crossed the threshold of the doorway; and a less guileless and confiding being than herself would have drawn an ill-omen from the circumstance, according to the simple superstitions of the country. But Gertrude left this to the old female who walked behind her, who, with the fatuity of a genuine old crone, muttered out involuntarily, "Ha! that's unlucky!"

Gertrude, however, only felt that it was her lover's arm—her husband's—that supported her step, even as his love supported her heart. Her thoughts were alone on him—on his affection, his protection, his truth, and the happiness she alone looked for or could prize as it should be involved in his.

A brief space intervened, and now the rite was performed—the benison pronounced—the pair were one. The gratulations of the good priest were yet on his lips, when a loud and impatient knocking startled the whole group, roused from its solemn propriety the sacred edifice, and filled the vaulted roof, gallery, and pillared aisle, with echoes at once discordant and profane.

Mr. Fenton immediately expressed his surprise at the cause of the clamour, and went in the direction of the church doors, which, by a prudent precaution on the part of our hero, had been kept double-locked. The representation to the sexton on the preceding evening, of his desire of having the ceremony uninterrupted and unintruded on, aided at the same time by the convincing argument of a douceur, had completely prevailed with that grave-digging worthy. He was now, accordingly, most conveniently dilatory, while the bridegroom, pretending no less surprise than Fenton, repaired to the small portal of the vestry that opened on the other side of the churchyard, while he desired Gertrude, with a composed air and a smile, not to be alarmed, and consigned her to the care of the old domestic who had accompanied her to the church. The knocking, meantime, still continued, and with increased impatience; and now the sound of crowbars, or some such ponderous instrument, was heard applied to the folding doors, as though to force them open.

Fenton in vain raised his voice to request the assailants to desist, and called for the sexton to come and unlock the doors. His voice, it is needless to say, even if it had rivalled in power and volume that of fifty Stentors and five-hundred Lablaches, would have been drowned in the

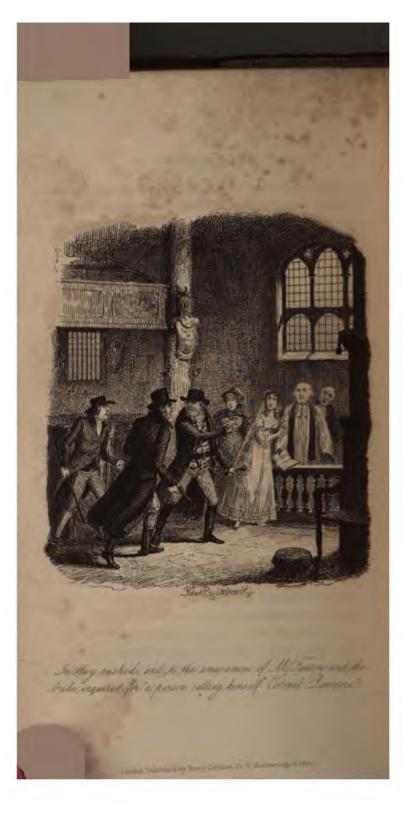
echoes of the church, which were permitted to have no cessation. The sexton, a bit of a knave himself, had been so well tutored and bribed in the course of the instructions Renmore had given him on the preceding evening, with a precaution well nigh prophetic, that he forgot not one tittle of the part he had to play, and for which he had been so amply " remembered !" Amongst other little items, he had been instructed to enter the registry of our hero's marriage according to his real name, and as apparent on the genuine "licence" signed by the ordinary. This, by-the-bye, had been procured by our hero on the occasion of his expedition to Cockermouth, so that the validity of his marriage had been secured. To satisfy Fenton, he had shewn the worthy clergyman a counterfeit document, bearing his fictitious name, in which, however, the ordinary's signature was so faithfully executed that it was impossible to detect one false stroke in the whole manual manœuvre.

Thus, with a "laudable diligence," no less than consistency of character, we find our accomplished hero still labouring in his vocation of deceiving his fellow-men; and while they would call it "forging and swindling," he would call it making them dupes of his dexterity! By such different names are the same things often called, just as things are seen through different "media!"

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But to return to the church. The sexton at length came forward with well-assumed bustle, and proceeded to move back the ponderous wards of the lock, with a key big enough to have rivalled that of marble in the hand of St. Peter's colossal statue at the Vatican.

The door-folds of British oak, tough and black with age, well rivetted too, and ribbed with iron, had stood, with their wonted sternness of repose, unshaken and unmoved by the "assault and battery" that had been directed against them. The moment the wards had given way, in rushed the assailants, like an angry tide that has been repressed, and hastens to force its way forward at the first outlet given for the passage of its fury. In they rushed; and to the amazement of Mr. Fenton and the bride, inquired for "a person calling himself Colonel Renmore," declaring that "if he was not one of the party present, he must be somewhere concealed in the church!"

- "Concealed in the church!—Colonel Renmore! it is true he is in the church, but not concealed in it! He is close at hand; the tumult you made occasioned his looking to see what it could mean; but what should you want with him?"
- "I thought so! I knew I should lead you on the right scent!" exclaimed one of the men, turning round to his comrades, and who acted as a

guide, or jackall, to hunt down the prey of the officers of justice; for such was the character of the assailants. This man, from the malignant smile that played on his lip, the look of malice and treachery that his pallid countenance displayed, was at once recognised by the bride as no other than Quandish, as a shriek of dismay and fear had escaped her, at his untoward intrusion.

After the discipline of "sousing" he had gone through, to the amusement of the party on the lake, his first thought on reaching terra firma again was the prosecution of his revenge. He therefore lost no time in setting to work, and discovering whither the object of his pursuit and persecution had fled. He called to mind that Gertrude had been the sharer of our hero's boat; accordingly, he first of all directed himself to learn the whereabout of Gertrude; and on repairing instantly to Buttermere, and finding she was not there, he proceeded at once to Lorton on the following (that is, the present) morning, deeming it certain that if not at home with her mother, she must be at the house of her adopted father, Fenton.

"Wherever she was, Renmore too (or Hatfield) was to be found." So argued Quandish; and in order that no time should be lost in the apprehension of his desired victim, the officers of justice (already mentioned as lurking at Keswick) were

summoned to accompany him in his second pursuit; his first with " Master Groat" not having been successful.

Instantly on arriving at Lorton, which they did at about the period of the middle of the marriage service, they called at the parsonage house, and inquired for the persons they wanted.

The domestic, however, could not satisfy them as to the name of the gentleman "who was gone to church to be married," since neither Gertrude nor Fenton had said anything of the matter to any domestic in the house. The intelligence, however, that Gertrude Wetherby was "gone to church to be married to a gentleman," was quite sufficient to urge the party in pursuit to hasten to the sacred edifice.

Quandish's eyes sparkled, his heart beat high with malign impatience, at having now brought, as he hoped, the quarry at length to bay. How would his rancour and jealousy triumph, to mar the union he so envied—to be in time to prevent it, and frustrate the happiness of his rival!

The obstacle they met with in finding the church doors studiously barred to prevent all interruption, only confirmed the suspicion and heightened the impatience of the leader of the pack and his eager followers. And now to take up the story at the point where we left it.

" Has the marriage,"- gasped out Quandish,

livid with rage, and weak with the effort of forcing the door,—" has the marriage—"

"Taken place?" said Mr. Fenton. "Yes, certainly; it was concluded just as you began your assault on the doors."

Quandish made no answer at first, but stamped his foot on the pavement, and then exclaimed—"He has, then, indeed foiled me!" and as he gnashed his teeth and sank back against the column of the aisle, he darted a malignant glance at Gertrude. She (as we have already witnessed) had been ready to sink under the surprise and terror of this whole unexpected, and to her inexplicable and unaccountable scene. She turned with anxiety to the officers of justice, as Mr. Fenton inquired of them—

"What is it you are in want of? or whom in search for? Did you say, Colonel Renmore?"

"Colonel Renmore!" was the reply of one of the men, accompanied with a scornful laugh. "Colonel Rogue, he ought more properly to be called! Why, here is another pretty piece of news come to light about this gentleman! He turns out to be the identical swindler that, under the name of Manners, eluded the vigilance of the Dublin justices so long. But come—what are we doing? we are talking while he is making off," continued the man to his brother myrmidons. But before we follow them on their pursuit, we must turn to Gertrude.

"Is it possible!" she exclaimed, in a faint voice, as further utterance was denied her, while she sank lifeless on the arm of Mr. Fenton. The bridal wreath fell from her pale, lovely brow as it drooped downwards, and the roses waned on her cheek.

Fenton's bosom was divided between painful surprise as regarded the charge made against the bridegroom, and concern for the ill-fated girl who was his wife. "I thought there was something on his mind," he hastily exclaimed to himself, "beyond the subject to which the conversation I had with him related. I remember, now, his embarassment at the close of his interview with me yesterday evening. And yet, I trust, there is some mistake in all this. If it be true what these men allege—" and then bending his venerable brow over that of Gertrude, as the tear rose in his eyes—" Unhappy girl!" he exclaimed—" beloved, unhappy girl!"

The good man's thoughts were now solely directed to the care of the cherished child of his adoption; for such his heart esteemed her; while it whispered to him on the present occasion that she had yet stronger claims on his tenderness, now that she was beset with misfortune. He therefore having ascertained that the bridegroom was indeed not to be found, proceeded to leave the sacred edifice with his unfortunate and lovely charge.

Quandish, at the same time, starting from the train of his individual regrets, and the unavailing spleen he had vented at being too late to prevent the envied marriage of our hero, directed now his thoughts to the immediate resumption of the pursuit.

"Let us be gone!" he said, as he hastily took the lead of his comrades. "The game cannot have fled far."

Accordingly, before Mr. Fenton had cleared the threshold of the church-porch, followed by the old female domestic, the myrmidons of justice were again on the track of their prey. They had soon gained the outside of the churchyard palings, but were for a moment at fault, and undecided as to the direction in which they should shape their pursuit.

"Don't go that way," said Quandish, hastily; "that leads back to the cover the fox has just been unearthed from. He is further afield. Go, by all means, in the opposite direction from the village. Be assured we shall soon be on the scent."

"True, true! It must be so; he must have taken this way," said the foremost officer, pointing to a lane that led eastward from the village; "we'll go this way."

So saying, away they hastened.

"That confounded turning at top of the hill, yonder," said another of the myrmidons, "will favour his escape;—but look, what have we here?" he added to Quandish, as they came to a low wall, over which there was a raised style made, not of wood, but of a huge slab of red sand-stone, and which led to a pathway across the fields.

"That was his!—that was his!" cried Quandish; "it is a part of his mock military dress. Look at the embroidery! he cannot be far off!" and his livid countenance, as he spoke, wore an expression of fiendish glee, and his keen, deep-sunk eyes twinkled with a ferocity worthy a spirit of evil.

"I say, old man!" cried out, here, the foremost officer, who was about to cross the style, addressing an aged figure who was sitting on the bank, "have you seen any one pass this way?"

"Ugh, ugh, ugh!" coughed out the old man, as he slowly raised up his brow, over which the thin silvery locks strayed,—"Seen any one pass?"

"Ay! seen any one pass?—a tallish person, with much the appearance (more's the pity) of a gentleman, and dressed in an officer's dress?"

"How long ago do you think it may be?"

"Why, ten minutes, perhaps," said Quandish, inquiringly.

"Why, ay, then, I did see some one pass; and over that stile, across the field, I reckon—"

"What !--where you come out on the Carlisle road?" asked Quandish.

"I can't say for sartin; but I dare say a did. I shouldn't know un agin were I to see un."

"We should know him again, though, if we were to see him," they simultaneously cried, as in full triumph of confidence they hurried away from the mumbling old man, to improve upon the hint he had given them. Meantime, when their back was turned, the old man (who was not altogether unlike old Mike), having watched them till they had gone some distance, and made a turning round a hedge so that his movements could not be seen, smiled with a look of contempt, as he said, "You would know him, would you?"

At the same time he looked back, at the foot of the stile, where the men, in their hurry to take the wearer, had left the military cloak which had been dropped there, and picking it up, he put it hastily under his arm, as he proceeded immediately behind the screen of the hedge-side, towards a wood that flanked the field in an opposite direction to that in which he had dispatched Quandish and his satellites.

On the further skirt of this wood led a lane, which, after running for some little way in a southeasterly direction, at length came out on the road leading to the West Riding of Yorkshire. From this spot he hastened, till he came to a ridge of hill, the height of which he gained with an alacrity of step which did credit to his years; and then, pausing for breath, he looked back northward in the direction where the officers were now pursuing their vain chase, most probably along the Carlisle road.

With another smile of contempt, he repeated, with a significance which would have well suited old Mike himself—

"You would know him, would you-ha, ha!"

It was, however, not the ancient mariner that spoke, but the singular old man whom our readers may remember, as exciting so much the curiosity of Golefield and others at the Buttermere church, and afterwards in company with Mike, in a preceding page of our story.

CHAPTER XVI.

" He knows who gave that love sublime, And gave that strength of feeling, great Above all human estimate."

WORDSWORTH.

"I climb'd the dark brow of the mighty Helvellyn;
On the right Strathen-edge round the Red Tarn was bending,

afternoon of the day subsequent to that on which he commenced his ramble had arrived. Its route had been circuitous and devious; now running on the brow of precipices, now sinking into the depth of glens; and the night had been passed at an obscure little inn, where the peasant weeds, in which he had been hitherto habited, were changed for a plain travelling dress and cloak, which it should seem he had procured at some town through which he had passed.

And now, as he stood on the south-westward brow of Helvellyn, a flood or sheet of light, as it seemed, spread before him, glittering through the foliage of a thick grove of oak, and birch, and sycamore, and on following the mazes of a little wild turf-path, where the tinklings of the sheepbell alone woke the peaceful echoes of the hill, he came out upon what appeared a majestic river.

He had arrived at its banks through the grove already described, and found now that this sheet of light, that had gleamed so resplendently to his view from the brow of the mountain, was the lovely lake of Windermere, whose smooth surface reflected now the golden blaze of the summer sun. He walked along for some little distance, under the grateful canopy of the boughs that overhung the margin of the lake, when he "was aware," as the old ballads have it, of a person who was seated by

the water-side, under the shade of a gnarled oak, whose twisted roots thrust themselves into the water.

This person was plainly dressed, in the rustic guise of a well-tanned straw hat, with broad brim, and yellow as an old bee-hive; a fustian shooting jacket and ancle boots, thick and sturdy as the oak roots on which their wearer rested them. Plain, however, as his outward gear might be, it could not disguise or detract from the superiority of character perceptible in his countenance; and as he turned round on hearing a footstep approach him, and looked up to see who it was that was advancing, there was an expression, thoughtful at once and serene, cheerful at once and intelligent, that interested Jackson. The silvery locks of this our wanderer-the aspect of sorrow that sobered vet more the brow of age-that feebleness, too, of step, and the bowed frame which supported it on a stick-no less excited in turn the veneration, and engaged the kindly feeling, of the person who now looked up in Jackson's face, as this venerable old man accosted him, inquiring the shortest route to Kendal.

"I will e'en put you in the way myself," replied the person, rising from his rude seat; "and as you appear a stranger in this wild district, it will afford me much pleasure to be of service in pointing out any objects of curiosity that may lie within our ken." And so saying, he walked forward along the bank of the stream, followed by Jackson, who replied—

- "You are very good; but my time will scarcely allow me to delay so long, in this lovely region, as I should desire. Certainly, one spot there is in the neighbourhood which I should have much desired to visit."
 - " And what is that, pray, might I ask?"
- "Why, Grasmere; for it is the abode of one whose works must be dear to all who are lovers of nature, and are delighted in finding infused through his page all the chaste and sublime admonishings that her spirit whispers to the heart and mind. I speak of Woodsland."

A smile played on the lip, and shone in the brow of Jackson's companion, as he replied—

- "And I think I may say, from what I know of Woodsland's character, that you could not have greater pleasure in visiting his place of abode, than he would feel flattered by the compliment, and endeavour to shew himself sensible of it by any attention he could offer."
- "I have no doubt I should find him everything that is benign as a man, even as he is sublimely simple and chastely fervent as a poet. You know him well, I dare say."
 - " Indeed! I ought to know him well. Nor

would it be a small or trivial lesson I should have achieved, if, in doing so, I had learned to master that highest trial of philosophy—the Knowledge of Self."

"Say you so?" replied Jackson, as he looked in his companion's face with mingled surprise and pleasure; "and am I, then, to understand from those words that I am in the presence of the sage and poet himself?"

Woodsland (for it was himself) replied only by a reverence of the head, as Jackson continued—

"Indeed! I cannot doubt it! the spirit-workings that are eloquent in that countenance (excuse me, I am no flatterer) were sufficient assurance to me on my first meeting it, that I stood in the presence of no common person. Let me express, then," continued Jackson, "how happy I am, circumscribed as I am in the time I am permitted to stay in this spot, to have had the enviable chance of falling in (though only for so brief a space) with one whose sojourn in the neighbourhood affords it its chief interest;—no less so, indeed, than the residence of his brother bards, Golefield and Routhmore, yield a yet loftier interest to the lovely haunts of Derwentwater."

"You speak of friends—of dear brothers to me," replied the poet; "they were both with me at Grasmere but yesterday; but Routhmore has left me to repair to the metropolis, where the world is now expecting from the press a noble production of his pen. I perused it with delight in manuscript but yesternight, and if the characteristics of this my brother poet exhibit more of what Homer calls the 'phreen' than the 'thumos'—more of the glow of 'Mind' than the depth of Feeling,—yet it is a 'mind'—'a phreen'—that unfolds a mine of treasure in the riches of descriptive colouring—of ardent thought, and all the hurry of action."

"Yes; I have understood that such as you state are more particularly the characteristics of Routhmore as a poet; and much as I admire his writings, yet I cannot help feeling that the main essential of what is strictly poetry exists in Feeling or Passion. To soar to the greater heights of the muse, assuredly Wisdom and Imagination are the sublimer attributes requisite, no less than passion; but in saying this, I regard works of a very superior pretension and scope of plan, such as constitute the epic."

"True; the general view of any greater plan must be taken by Imagination. But then the details must be warm with passion, with feeling, with sensibility, to sustain its poetic pretension. What a pity, now, is it that my friend Golefield had not less of fancy and airy speculation, and more of imagination curbed by judgment, and

directed to views more suited to the sympathies of his fellow-men."

"You would say, that if such were the case, he would indeed realize all that is requisite to build up the attributes of the highest order of poets?"

"Yes, I do indeed! for to the daring and lofty views of imagination, he would add all the fervour and tenderness of passion, in the passages, scenes, and characters forming the detail of the subject."

" Has he left you too, as well as Routhmore?"

"No; I have yet the pleasure of his company, together with that of a gentleman who accompanied him and Routhmore hither, to indulge in his favourite diversion of fishing—for there is famous char in this meer. You, perhaps, may have heard his name—Dr. Esdaile?"

"No, indeed, I have not the pleasure of being acquainted with him—even by name," replied Jackson, while a smile, however, strove on his lip, as though testifying a certain consciousness, that, notwithstanding his disavowal of any such acquaintance, the name was yet not altogether unknown to him.

"He is an amusing, good-natured, and sensible person—Dr. Esdaile; I left him and my 'brother' Golefield together not long ago. The Doctor was busily employed with his angle-rod, by the side of a brook that runs a little further onwards into the lake—there!" he continued, pointing out a spot along the meer side; "do you see that little creek or bay? it is somewhere about there, that they should be. His companion is, I dare say, stretched under the shade of the boughs, on some moss-bank, hard by, amusing himself with his fancies."

"Yes, I discern the point you mention," replied Jackson, who now followed the poet up the slope over which the path ran, diverging for some little way from the water's edge. Woodsland continued speaking: "We had expected the pleasure, at least Dr. Esdaile led us to hope so, of having an accession, too, to our little party, in the person of a gentleman who has been a visitor in the neighbourhood of Keswick for some time past:—Colonel Renmore, who is, as I am informed, a most agreeable and accomplished person."

In saying this the poet could not have heard of the "post-office" discovery, which had not yet reached, it appears, his classic retreat at Grasmere.

"What? Renmore, of Clan-renmore, in the county Caithness?" asked Jackson, in a tone of much seeming desire for information.

"Yes, the same. You are perhaps acquainted with that gentleman?"

"Oh, no! not in the slightest! — I merely vol. II. Q

recollect the name,—I have heard the name. No doubt his presence would have formed a desirable addition to your party, agreeable as you describe him to be."

Thus answering, old Mr. Jackson made shift with the aid of his stick to clamber up the ascent after his companion, who had now arrived at its summit, and pausing, turned round to the former as he exclaimed,

"And now you will be rewarded for your pains in fighting up this somewhat steep path, by the splendid view of the meer which you are afforded from it." And the poet and Jackson stood contemplating the magnificence and beauty of the scene for some moments, as the latter expressed his admiration of it.

"The lake," he said, "has the appearance of a majestic river, rather than a meer!"

"And beautifully it loses itself in the embrace of those boughs," added the poet, "that seem to take it into the peaceful bosom of their recesses, as though a home receiving a welcome and beloved guest to its repose!" and after a pause, he continued, "As it wanders tranquilly along, eluding our ken and lost in the distance, it seems to me like a tranquil and happy Spirit entering the bosom of Futurity! Such thoughts does the effect of distance inspire, in the awe it adds to softer and

more peaceful reflections. Do not say," continued the bard, smiling, "the idea is far-fetched."

"On the contrary, it is a sublime and touching association of ideas that you give utterance to, and elevates the calmer gratification of the sensations awakened by the mere tranquillity of those waters, however lovely."

"You are a kind critic," said Woodsland, with a sigh; "I wish the world would afford us more persons like yourself; but really I have found criticism a rock where my poor pinnace has been somewhat too savagely tossed, as it has trimmed its sail along a poetic tide not permitted to flow so undisturbedly as that of yonder waters." And the poet paused, as he called to mind some unjust and malignant abuse, which preponderated over all fair criticism, at the expense of the earlier poems he had indited near this spot.

"Never fear," replied his companion, "but that the world will give you the credit which is your due, in time. Your 'pinnace' will then 'trim its sail,' and float with triumphant colours, (ay, as long as yonder waters shall flow,) down the sublime current of Time!"

Woodsland smiled and shook his head, as he replied, "Ah, poets (or those who aim at being so)

amuse themselves, indeed, with some such dream. It is, in sooth, the only source of vitality with them; and hard is the struggle to support themselves under the wounds their self-love has to sustain. We must be, I may say as one of the fraternity, very confiding, or (as you will perhaps suggest) very infatuated or conceited; one or the other of these must we be, to continue, as Milton says, 'strictly meditating the thankless muse,' in the teeth of all the derision and rancour so clamorously raised to silence us, or drown our voice."

"But there is a 'still small voice' within—the whispering of a sublime hope within the heart,—that assures you that the mind, of whose excellence and supremacy you are conscious, will one day be appreciated as is its due. The world will make you amends for the wrong done you by a portion of merely partial, or prejudiced, or undiscriminating libellers, who batten, for the most part, on abuse. What real genius ever was there that had not this high instinct? A grovelling mind may be abashed and cast down by such abuse, and the lyre it awakened be silenced and broken; but the exalted genius stretches its wing yet more strongly and daringly in the face of opposition."

"You speak kindly and encouragingly; and, indeed, there is, I think, some truth in what you say," replied the bard. Then, standing for a moment absorbed in his own thoughts, he added, "Yes; there

is a calm, confiding assurance in the bosom," (and his brow shone with a look of lofty hope and confidence,) "that speaks 'soothly,' nay, soothingly, too, (for 'soothly' implies rather 'flatteringly,') as the murmur of yonder waters to the harassed spirit. But to turn from self—is not this a spot," continued the poet of nature, "of real beatitude, in which to calm the wilder emotions of passion, and court the chaste and sublime communings it awakens?"

"Indeed, the poetry of nature nowhere speaks with greater charm, though at the same time with greater softness and tranquillity, than here. And I may remark, that if nature surprise us more, in those wilder and grander features which I have witnessed in foreign climes, yet she is here no less impressive, in a different way; if she startles us by throwing herself (if I may so express it) into the 'tragic attitudes' her fiercer and sterner features exhibit, yet she sways the mind and heart not less impressively, by a spell of a different character, when she pours over the soul that holy yet calm rapture, amidst scenes such as these—where she seems, as it were, to seek a sublimer repose, and to make her home!"

"I am delighted to hear you analyse so justly the attributes of our nobler British scenery," replied the poet, in no small degree gratified to have met with a person who contemplated his favourite scenes with feelings that so much accorded with his own. "You precisely explain, too, the effect produced on my own mind by the bland and lofty spirit of these haunts. This effect is, indeed, 'Religion!' and of this pure spirit would I delight to be a worshipper. I mean to express, by the term 'religion,' that awful charm, that chaste rapture, that grandly soothing sensation, which is the very essence of devotion."

"This feeling, indeed, breathes through your pages; and which, as I confidently augur, the world will ere long—"

But just here the attention of Jackson was called to the sound of footsteps approaching the spot where himself and the poet of nature were conversing. They both turned hastily round to see whose the form should be that advanced, when forth from the thicket which clothed the sides of the hill emerged the figure of a clodpole, who was pursuing his way doggedly along, with a bundle at his back, and who had struck into the path by the meer-side, from the high road, which ran at no very great distance off.

"Why, this is honest Jock, the Buttermere and Keswick carrier," said Woodsland. "I know

the clown well. If Golefield were here, he would amuse himself with 'trying conclusions' with him, like Jacques with Touchstone, the 'motley fool o' the forest.' Well, Jock, how do you, my friend?" he continued, as this worthy had now come up to the spot where the bard and Jackson stood. "Well, Jock, and what news in the parts whence you plod?"

"Why, if mayhap you have not heard it yet, it be news that will make you stare," replied Jock, in his usual style of indirect answering.

"Indeed!" said Woodsland and Jackson both at the same time, though the latter averted his head from the clown as he spoke, appearing to be still occupied in contemplating the beauty of the landscape.

"Indeed!—ay, indeed, you will be surprised to hear it," replied the clown, not, however, thinking proper to gratify their curiosity.

Well, well! let us hear it; out with it."

"Why, now," replied the clown, with a smile of pretended surprise, "to think you haven't heered it a'ready!"

"If we had, we should not ask you to tell it us," said Woodsland.

"Tell it you—tell what to you?" continued the clown, still beating about the bush, with the oafish

waggery that characterized him. "Mayhap,—mayhap, I say, you know what I be going to tell you. Well, well, don't be angered wi' me. I will tell it you. In a word, then, who should you suppose, after all, Colonel Renmore turns out to be?"

"Colonel Renmore!" both Jackson and the bard exclaimed. "Is it of him your news is? Who should he turn out to be, pray, but himself?"

"Not a bit of it," replied Jock; "but somebody else, and who else should you think?"

"How can we possibly tell? Pray be explicit, my good fellow, and speak your story at once," said Woodsland.

"Why, then, if you must know, he turns out to be the famous 'Gem'man Hatfield' himself! Ay, you may stare, my worshipful masters, but the truth is as I say—no one talks of anything else in all the parts about Keswick."

"Hatfield!" exclaimed both Woodsland and Jackson. "Is it possible?" continued the former, turning round to his companion; "then, after all, I need not so much regret the Colonel's engagements having deprived our party of his company."

"I suppose," proceeded Jackson, but still scarcely looking Jock straight in the face, " the

officers of justice are on the pursuit after him? perhaps have apprehended him by this time."

"Ay; maybe they have," replied Jock; though I'm sure I don't care if he gets away from 'em, for a kinder body never lived, that I will say for him," continued the clown, thumping his bundle down on the rock-bank; "for I never sarved any one who behaved so handsome to me, though it wor but for a short time." And here Jock explained, to the surprise of Woodsland, how he had been in the capacity of groom for a brief period to the sai-disant Colonel Renmore.

Mr. Jackson also testified his surprise, but suddenly remembering that his time was precious, and that he had already delayed longer than he had intended, now took leave of the poet, with many expressions of gratification at having fallen in with one who, it was needless for him to say, had so much claim on his interest.

"I wish you could have found it in your power to have given me your company at my hermitage at Grasmere; you would have been gratified in meeting my brother bard, Golefield; and Dr. Esdaile would have entertained you."

"I should have been indeed delighted to accept your kind and flattering invitation, if it were possible for me to do so; but I fear I must lose no time in reaching Kendal; and if you could put me in the direction of the road thither, I should be much obliged."

"Then you will promise me, should your movements bring you back into this neighbourhood at any future time, to favour me with a visit?"

"I shall be honoured and delighted in paying my respects, which I shall (I need scarcely say) make a point of doing."

"What? does the gem'man want to go to Kendal?" interposed Jock; "why, I'm a-going that way on my journey to Lunnon after a new place. I'll shew you the way, Sir," he continued, touching his hat with awkward civility, and preceding Mr. Jackson on the way.

"Thank you-thank you, my good friend," replied Jackson; "I am much obliged to you."

So saying, he shook hands with Woodsland, and followed Jock, by a little narrow and winding path that led through the wood that skirted the lake side, till it came out on the high road to Kendal in a southerly, and Ambleside in a northerly direction.

"Oh! here we are on the road," exclaimed Mr. Jackson, as they had now arrived at the termination of the lane. "I'm much obliged to you, and can now proceed perfectly well by myself. So

you can pursue your way, my good friend, while I rest here on the bank a moment; and here's for your pains."

So saying, he gave Jock a small coin to drink his health, which remembrance having been duly acknowledged by the clown, with a touch of the hat and a "thank ye, Sir," Mr. Jackson was not sorry to find (for reasons best known to himself) that he was alone, once more.

And, in fact, so much does it appear that he wished to escape all chance of again incurring the companionship of Jock, that he diverged from the high road, into a lane on the opposite side of it to that on which the lake was situate; and when Jock, with that curiosity which was an ingredient in his character, looked round to spy if the "old gentleman" was still resting himself on the bank, he stood transfixed with oafish amazement to find he had vanished, and was nowhere to be descried.

"Well; that's odd, howsomdiver," he exclaimed, as he continued to plod his way along.

Leaving him, then, to pursue his course along the "highway," and Mr. Jackson, also, his course along the "by-way," we will return to Woodsland.

He was, of course, all impatience to unfold the intelligence which Jock's budget had afforded him to his friends Golefield and the Doctor; so to find

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them out, he hastened in the direction of the brook where he believed them to be. We will, however, anticipate him in his arrival at this spot, in order to see what morning's sport our friend the char-angling Doctor had enjoyed, whom we left some time ago merrily journeying in the company of Golefield and Routhmore, by way of Crummock water, on their visit to Woodsland.



JAMES HATFIELD

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BEAUTY OF BUTTERMERE:

A Storp of Modern Times.

WITH ILLUSTRATIONS,

BY ROBERT CRUIKSHANK.

"I have great comfort from this fellow: methinks he hath no drowning mark upon him: his complexion is perfect gallows! Stand fast, good fate, to his hanging! Make the rope of his destiny our cable, for our own doth little advantage,"—TEMPEST.

IN THREE VOLUMES.

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ADVENTURES

OF

JAMES HATFIELD.

CHAPTER I.

"Or with my Bryan and a book,
Loiter long days at Shawford brook,
There meditate my time away."

IZAAK WALTON.

"He, sighing, took his leave;
And Heaven knows the heart's sincere
Of Allen Brooke of Wyndermere."

OLD WESTMORELAND BALLAD.

EVERY day had been devoted by Esdaile, since his sojourn in the neighbourhood of Windermere, to his favourite recreation. On the occasion of the present morning, himself, with rod and line in hand, (Bryan by his side,) and his distinguished friends, Golefield and Woodsland, had wandered from Grasmere to the spot where we now find them. Woodsland having proceeded to pay a morning visit to a person not far from Windermere, had left the Doctor and his brother bard,

Golefield, together, near the creek already above mentioned, and it was in the course of his way back to them that he met Mr. Jackson.

Into this creek ran the little brook where the char-angler was exercising his " cunning," with all the address of an expert fly-fisher. Golefield had thrown himself listlessly down upon the bank, where, under the grateful canopy of the alders that overshadowed it, and the stream whose margin it was, he reclined like Jacques, ruminating on the babbling torrent, and descanting on all that "was, and is, and is to be," through many a far-winding maze of thought, and many a varying train of association. Bryan too, having lapped a quantum sufficit of the pure lymph, quietly stretched himself by the side of the metaphysician, undisturbed, except by the occasional buzzing of a fly in his ear, at which he was obliged in self-defence to snap; while, now and then, his head was raised in looking towards his master, on whom the trusty animal constantly kept his eye.

Too much occupied was his master to return the glance of Bryan; all engrossed was he in his pursuit, humming every now and then a verse from one of his favourite ballads of the "north countrie," or snatches from poets—simple, sweet, and vigorous,—well-remembered, too, amidst the haunts of flood and greenwood tree, of which they carolled,

and where Naiad and Dryad were the presiding Spirits.

These denizens of golden Arcady!—how would the glowing dream of a Claude or Gaspar Poussin have delighted to waken them up here, amidst the Arcadia of wood and wild around, and see them start across the thicket glade in arch gambols, as some laughing Dryad-nymph would elude the pursuit of the wanton Faun; while he, anon, baffled in his chase, seats him down on the rude stump of some aged trunk, and essays to win the coy fugitive to his side, by the oaten reed, whose tuneful shrill note makes vocal the woodland echoes!

Our angler, however, was not of an imagination so vivid as that of a Poussin or a Claude, any more than he was an instrumental performer, like the Faun whom their art might represent as making melody. No; the limits of his "fancies" were circumscribed by "fancying" he should be able to catch some of the spotted finny dwellers of the crystal stream beneath him; and his soul in the sport, thus he angled, and thus, as we have mentioned, he sung and spoke by turns.

"That's it—that will do!" he said, succeeding in making his fly alight on the surface of a little ripple in the water, where the shadowing boughs threw a gloom over the stream, and hid or veiled the fine "gut" from which the fly depended, from the quick-sighted prey—" Softly—so—" he continued, as he let the rippling current wave the fly up and down of itself, without any aid from pulling the line, or moving the rod; and then he stood watching it as he hummed the well-known ditty of Kit Marlowe—

"If that the world and love were young And truth in every shepherd's tongue, And—"

Here a fish snapped at the fly, and broke off—not the hook, but the stanza, in medio, as the "adventure" in Hudibras. "That's it! bravo! I've hooked one!" he exclaimed to Golefield, who was, however, lost in some metaphysical dream, and paid no attention to the angler or his ecstasy.

Bryan shewed more interest in the matter, and roused himself, barked, wagged his tail, and trotted up to his master; who, with the true zest of an experienced fly-fisher, gave the hooked fish "play," and away it ran down the stream, pulling out the whole length of line from the reel.

"Come, that will do; you have gone far enough,
—so now we will draw you back, my friend," said
the angler, as he proceeded to wind up the line
again on his reel, as he continued the song—

[&]quot;A gown made of the finest wool
With buckles of—the purest gold,—
And—coral—clasps,—and—"

"There! now I believe I have you safe," he said, as he put his landing-net under the prey, and brought it forth from the stream, flapping its tail, and flung it on the rich bed of grass and flag, spangled with oxlip and mallow flowers, that fringed the margin.

But the angler had now put on another fly. "Ah, ha! I see," he said to himself, "they will take the 'red-dun' to-day;—or suppose I try a black fly?—no; the weather's too fair. The red-dun and the grey-palmer—these will 'kill' to-day, as sure as those waters flow, or as that Golefield's dreams are up in the seventh heaven of meta-physics. Holloa! my friend, my meditative spirit, how fares it with you?" And as he thus addressed his companion, he rolled up the capacious folds of the fishing-book, in the various pockets of which he kept the different 'flies,'—while the bard returned answer—

"Oh! well,—very well!" just raising his head to reply, as he dropped it again to look on the paper on which he was writing.

"Oh! he is giving birth to some poetico-metaphysical crotchet or another, I see," said Esdaile, "so I wont disturb him in any dreams so precious. Lie down, Bryan!—down!—and now for it again."

So saying, he once more cast his fly, adroitly

making it light on a dark spot of water, quite underneath the overarching shrub and rank sedge that thrust itself forward over the current.

"That's it—that will do—softly—a little nearer this way—softly, or its wing will be wetted—there there—so—

Under the greenwood tree,
 Who loves—
 Who loves to dwell with me.

There's one rising-

* And tune his merry note Unto the sweet bird's'—

Hush !-no-he has darted off-

'Unto the sweet bird's throat,'

That's it!—ah! I've got you this time;" and again, as the fish seized the fly, he gave it play, and drew it up at length in triumph as before.

In this manner did he continue for some little time practising his angler's craft, until he had laid three brace of the spotted water-quarry on the grass bed of the bank. And now, finding the poet had regained his legs, arrested his fleeting thoughts on paper, and embodied his meditations in writing, he put up his tackle, and proceeded with him on his way from the stream, towards the creek whither we left Woodsland on his way to meet them.

"A charming morning's sport I have had; this 'red-dun' has done wonders for me!" he said, holding up at the same time his landing net, where the char were deposited on some wet moss and broad leaves of the water-lily—a "death-couch" worthy of them.

"You have indeed been successful. I have no patience for such a pursuit as angling," replied the bard.

"No; because instead of hooking a fish and letting it run with your line, you would be yourself 'hooked,' and run away with by some far-fetched fancy, which might well make you forget your line, when you forgot even the ground on which you were standing!"

Golefield laughed at the Doctor's usual banter, as he replied—

"No, no! if I took the rod and line in my hand, my soul would be in the sport as certainly as that my form would be glassed in the wave over which I stood. If it were not, I should not have to complain of want of patience, because I should in that case forget the occupation of angling, and be amused with other thoughts; but I fear, when I did think of it, I should lack patience to pursue it in the exemplary way in which you do."

"This is always what people say who do not understand the angler's 'gentle art;' you admire my patience, without considering that by superior skill, a good angler improves the time which a bad or inexperienced angler loses. The last, indeed, has need of patience; because he catches so few fish, and his 'bites' are so 'far between,' through his own want of address and judgment in the craft."

"Well, there is much truth in what you say, and your reasoning may apply," continued the bard in moralizing vein, "to half the complaints in the world, on the score of success. There is a want of address, or requisite talent, or knowledge, or, yet more, the improvement of favourite opportunities, that forms too often the real secret of ill fortune. I say that this is often the case, though not always, since it need not be specified how frequently very superior merit even is neglected, and 'produces no fruit,' not through its own fault."

So spoke Golefield, while his companion still looking with complacency at the contents of his landing net, proceeded with his wonted epicurean gusto.

"Come, I think I have secured for us no unacceptable addition to our day's banquet. After all, my philosopher, it puts a man much in good humour with himself and all things around him, to find himself seated down (lowly and grovelling consideration as you esteem it) to a good repast, to a more than ordinarily inviting specimen of the creature comforts Heaven has bestowed on us. Come, confess it, all ether, all 'fervidus aer,' as you are."

Golefield smiled, and only exclaimed to himself, "Epicuri de grege!"

"Besides," added the physician, with due earnestness, "char is such a wholesome dish."

Golefield laughed outright now, as he exclaimed — "Ah! Doctor Esdaile, or Doctor Epicurus, I see you are recurring to one of the golden rules of your Code de Santé! Forgive me, however, if I should suggest, with reference to this, that your flattering the appetites of your patients is very much like a writer's flattering the less worthy passions of his readers, in order to achieve (if so he may) popularity."

"Nay, nay, you are hardly fair on me. I only flatter the appetites of my patients as a channel by which to administer to their indisposition, either of mind or body. I find it by far the most——"

-" Palatable course!" interposed Golefield, laughing.

"Ay, and the most efficacious no less. I can only say, that if I am wrong, there is yet scarcely one of my patients who would not exclaim, as Cicero does, only putting 'Esdaile' for 'Plato' — you know the passage."

"Namely, 'that they would rather err, according to your "golden rules," than go right according to the prescriptions of the rest of the faculty.'"

And here both our philosophers joined in the merriment that the above conclusion justly sanctioned; while Golefield added—"It is well you are candid enough, however, to acknowledge the possibility, at least, of error in your 'sublime system;' and if Mr. Howbiggen were here, I can't help thinking you would hear him mutter out something about 'placing the cart before the horse,' as regards other little points, too, of your code. What say you, most sage Doctor?"

"Oh! my worthy patient, Mr. Howbiggen, speaks as his spleen, not his reason, dictates. He amuses me much. He goes out of his way to be uncandid; and against his own conviction, I am confident," (continued the Doctor, with humorous self-complacency,) "opposes my plan of healing the physical ailments first,—before I hope to relieve the jaundice of the mind; for it is this he requires of me. Bless me, he knows as well as I do, only he wont acknowledge it,—with what different eyes a man views all around him, when his bodily health is more confirmed. Everybody but himself will acknowledge this; for as to more abstruse metaphysical questions, which the subject might sanction.

I leave those to yourself and Routhmore. So to return to the savoury point from which we started—namely, the 'dose' which, according to my 'golden rules,' I shall prescribe to yourself and our excellent host, Woodsland. I mean these splendid char for dinner."

And he held up the landing-net as he regarded the fish embedded in the moss. "Ah, I wish we had Gertrude Wetherby here to arrange them for us, as she did for Colonel Renmore and myself the first evening I had the pleasure of falling in with him. I am quite disappointed that he could not join our party here, and heartily glad should I be were he amongst us."

"Should you, indeed!" exclaimed a voice proceeding from some person behind him, which made the Doctor and Golefield both look round to see who he was; when they recognised the traits of their friend Woodsland, who had now just emerged from the thicket that clothed the brow of the slope overhanging the little creek or bay, at which, by different paths, the whole trio had now arrived.

"So you wish that Colonel Renmore, as you call him, were here?—perhaps when you hear of him what I have just heard, you would wish him away."

"Why, what is the matter?-what have you

heard?" exclaimed both Golefield and Esdaile in surprise.

Woodsland then proceeded to relate the intelligence which Jock had given him, concerning the circumstances of the post-office dilemma, and the marriage of Gertrude with the *soi-disant* Colonel Renmore.

"Well, of all surprises this is the most astonishing!" exclaimed Esdaile, when the account was finished. "What a pity it is that Hatfield was ever educated so well as he certainly must have been, in his earlier days, since it has so much contributed to his power of passing himself off as a 'gentleman.'"

"And with such complete success," replied Woodsland; "but they say he is a gentleman by birth,—though who his father is, is unknown; though some say, and he himself favours the belief, that he is a scion of a certain noble house."

"Yes, I have heard the story," said Esdaile;
"at any rate, on the strength of this persuasion, he bore the name of the family for some time, and gained unlimited credit by means of it, both in London and Dublin, some time ago. A pretty 'bait' to hold out to be sure; and men seem to have been mere 'gudgeons' in his hands.'"

"Indeed," said Golefield. "I really regret the man is not what he passed himself off as being; for a more agreeable companion, or a more sensible and really gentlemanlike man, I never met with."

"You would have liked him, I am confident," said Esdaile, looking round to Woodsland; "his conversation was particularly pleasing; nothing of the opposition or argumentative style in it. But it now strikes me as being artful, for it was a style of indirect flattery—of polite and delicate insinuation. It was gracefully deferential, without appearing at all to flatter the self-love of the person he addressed."

"There certainly must have been great charm in his conversation," replied Woodsland, "if it was such as you describe; and really I regret I had not been introduced to this polite 'Colonel,' who appears to have played his part so adroitly, and with such address; for I had often wished to see Hatfield, since his acts have made his name so bruited about of late; and I may add, his superior manner and style no less so."

"I cannot help smiling," replied Esdaile, "at the amazement this discovery must have occasioned our worthy friends at Howbiggen-house and Blacktarn. Often had they wished 'to see Hatfield;' little did they dream, when they expressed the wish, that he was so near them!"

"And perhaps they may have reason to wish yet that they never had seen him; for who knows?"

said Golefield, "our 'gentleman' may have been practising his knack at 'counterfeit' at the expense of some of them!"

"I should not be surprised," replied Esdaile: "and if I remember right, there was some little bet' between honest Lawton and the 'Colonel,' of which, be assured, we have yet to hear the result;"and Esdaile laughed at the thought of the promised denouement of this little mystery amongst others. "But whom have we here, approaching us in such a hurry?" he added, as his merriment subsided. Indeed all risible propensity was cut short, by the purport of a letter which was now put into his hand by a messenger from Blacktarn, who had repaired to Grasmere, where Esdaile was sojourning with Woodsland, and having been directed onwards to Windermere, had accordingly repaired thither to find him. Esdaile lost no time in perusing the letter.

"I must leave you," he exclaimed, to his friends Woodsland and Golefield, with much concern in his countenance, "without any delay: this letter states that Miss Lawton is seriously ill, and my medical services are required as speedily as possible."

"Indeed, I am most sorry to learn this," exclaimed Woodsland, while Golefield also expressed his regrets; "pray mention my concern," continued Woodsland, "for his daughter's illness, to my worthy friend Lawton; and since it appears I must lose you, Doctor, why, all I can say is, 'may all good angels wait on you,' and prosper your endeavours to restore your fair patient."

So saying, the two bards took leave of the physician, who, getting into the vehicle that the servant from Blacktarn had ready, and drawn up close by in the high road, he hastily drove off to Grasmere, doffed his angling dress, and then proceeded onward to Blacktarn.

The two "Genii" did not forget their estimable epicurean friend when at dinner; the char he had provided for their entertainment contributed to bring him back, with savoury memento, to their minds.

"I trust sincerely," said Woodsland, "he may meet with his usual success in restoring Miss Lawton; for 'droll' though he is in character, and original in his treatment, yet he is generally successful in 'curing,' rather than 'killing,' his patients, which is so happy a variety in the practice of medicine that no wonder it renders him popular!"

"I dare say, if the truth may be said, he never felt a more painful interest in any case, throughout the whole course of his practice, than in the present one."

"Ay, I believe I have discovered that it is true, what people have whispered about, that our good

friend Esdaile has a thought one of these days of 'proposing' to Miss Lawton. He is on terms of much friendship with herself and her father."

"Poor girl! I much fear her present illness is the result of the shock her spirits must have sustained in learning this affair of Hatfield; for she had most certainly conceived an attachment for him, and no small one either, as 'Colonel Renmore' and her father's guest. It was plain to perceive it, and when I told the poor Doctor what I had observed, not the wan hue of the inside of those alder leaves under which he stood angling was paler than his cheek."

"Well, well; he is at any rate rid of the rival who was so dangerous. But poor Gertrude Wetherby! I fear it will be some time before she will recover the shock this affair must have occasioned her," said Woodsland.

"Upon my word it is a serious matter; I feel for the poor girl with all my heart," replied the benign Golefield; "and Fenton, too, who cherishes her as his own daughter, he must be seriously affected by this sad business. I shall lose no time in looking in at Lorton, and offering what poor consolation my presence may possibly afford him."

Thus conversing, their colloquy being engrossed by the topics of all-absorbing interest, which we have heard them descanting on, the brother bards sat together and mused on all the chances and marvels which throng the romance of real life more singularly than even that of fiction.

"Ay," said Golefield, in reply to a remark of Woodsland to this effect; "real life, out-romances romance!"

CHAPTER II.

"Whatever comes, my heart shall sink no more:
And yet, I know not why, your words strike chill.
How false and cold seem all things!"

SHELLEY.

Considering how much Laura Lawton had been hurt and piqued at witnessing the attentions paid at the Regatta, by her father's late guest, to the humble though lovely belle of the "villagerie," it has by no means awakened our surprise to hear of the indisposition which had occasioned the attendance of Doctor Esdaile. We remember that she, together with Mr. Lawton, had taken leave of the festivities previously to those disclosures which had added so serious and extraordinary character to their interest; nor did she go, without being subsequently missed by that observant and "lively-witted" lady who, on her arrival with Mr. Howbiggen at the scene of festivities, looked round

the first thing for the Lawtons. Not finding them however, she, with a laudable desire to supply to them ample intelligence of all the interesting events they had failed to witness, lost no time, after the festivities were over, in hastening to Blacktarn.

Not more eager was Miss Howbiggen to enlighten their ignorance, than to lighten her own bosom of the weighty matter it yearned, as in the instance of Midas's wife, to be relieved of. The very next day, then, the carriage was ordered forth for Blacktarn; and if Miss Howbiggen had been hitherto anxious (or, as her brother would term it, "fidgety") to pour forth the contents of her budget before her friends, the Lawtons, the more so was she now, since the news of the marriage, had been just added to her stock of intelligence.

"How will Laura be surprised when she hears of it!" she exclaimed; "will it not astonish her! And what though it may occasion her perhaps a little pain,—considering the impression this very insinuating person, the soi-disant Colonel, assuredly made on her,—yet it is as well she knew the truth at once. It must come to her ears sooner or later; and besides, if a little shock may possibly be occasioned at first, it ought to be relieved by considering what an escape she has had! Indeed," continued the fair spinster, with amusing self-complacency, "we may both be thankful, for I confess this Colo-

nel, as he called himself, and as he appeared to be, was not altogether without making some slight impression in his favour on myself too." And here, if the humorous reader pleases, he may imagine her blushing at the "soft confession."

With these considerations, then, in her mind, away she went; not the least cause of her restlessness being her apprehension lest herself should not be the first to impart the intelligence. Her thoughts far outran the carriage wheels, and eagerly did she alight when they at length placed her before the portico of Blacktarn. On entering the drawing-room, she was all-anxiety, after the preliminary salutations between herself and Mr. and Miss Lawton, to launch the subject uppermost in her mind.

"You have not heard the news—have you?" she inquired, anxious to ascertain, in the first instance, whether any one had anticipated her in imparting the intelligence which she so hoped to be the foremost to communicate. She was soon set at rest on this point, by the vacant countenance and unconscious innocence with which Mr. Lawton replied—
"No; what news, pray?"

"Oh, then, you have not heard it? I have so much to tell you that I scarcely know where to begin. Oh! I am so sorry you did not wait a little longer on the island. It would have been well worth your while. My love," she continued, ab-

ruptly, to Laura, "how pale and unwell you look."
Then returning to the subject which so much engrossed her—"Yes, I am so sorry you did not stay. You lost so much by running away!"

"Well, well," interposed Mr. Lawton, anxious to stop this stream of tantalization, for such it was; "pray have the kindness to inform us what all this was, of so much interest, that Laura and myself lost, by leaving the island when we did.—Ahem!" he added, looking seriously, first at Miss Howbiggen, and then glancing at Laura; "for my part we both of us considered we had had quite enough by the time when we went away.—Ahem!"

Laura slightly coloured and looked aside, as Miss Howbiggen turned her eyes searchingly on her countenance, while at the same time she continued—

"Well, then, it appears you have not heard about the marriage!"

"No; what marriage?" said Mr. Lawton. "In the neighbourhood, was it?"

"Oh, yes; it took place not far off!" replied Miss Howbiggen, looking significantly at Laura.

"Let us hear, pray, all about it," said Mr. Lawton; "for you are famous for hearing all matters of local interest—ahem!—before any one else."

"We shall be glad to hear it?" added Laura to her father's words. "Shall you?" replied their tantalizing informant, simpering and pursing up her mouth, with a significance in her look truly irritating to the impatience of Mr. Lawton, and in which the gentle Laura was not altogether without concurring; and reasonably so, considering the subject was one so justly calculated to interest ladies.

"Who should you suppose, now, the lady is?" said Miss Howbiggen, determined to enjoy a little while longer the suspense and surmise of those she addressed; even as a cat plays with a mouse before she pounces on it, and rids it of its pain beneath her fatal claws.

"I'm sure I can't tell," was the reply of Mr. Lawton, waxing (to the delight of Miss Howbiggen) more and more fidgety; which effect, in discomfiting his usual solemnity of bearing, rendered him more than ordinarily droll in her eyes. "Perhaps," he added, smiling, with a good humour that at the same time did him credit—"perhaps the bride is no other than yourself!"

"No, indeed," she replied, with a somewhat indignant toss of the head. "I thank heaven that I have escaped at least;—but who would have thought it?"

"Oh! you thank Heaven you have escaped," rejoined Mr. Lawton; "then it should appear that the gentleman (whoever he may be) was an adof yours. So my surmise might possibly—
!—have been right!" he added, looking, with
r of satisfaction at his own sagacity, first at
Howbiggen and then at Laura, on whose lip
ile was playing—perhaps of kind congratulaat the fair spinster's "escape,"—perhaps indire of a certain degree of amusement at her
ing shewn she had considered herself thus in
ger.

Who can the bride be?" thought Laura, as ran over in her mind all the country belles she tew, from Penrith to Keswick, and from Appleby Kendal.

"Well, then," replied the relenting spinster, at ast, "I will keep you in suspense no longer."

And indeed she was as good as her word; for, if she had been tardy and tantalizing hitherto, she now made ample amends for thus painfully keeping her listeners on the tenter-hooks of expectation, by pouring forth, as fast as she could give it utterance, the flood of singular incidents which had been pent in her bosom, and to which she had indeed longed to yield a vent. Having first satisfied them that the bride was no other than the Beauty of Buttermere, she proceeded with the other portions of the story connected with this main circumstance. Surprise followed quickly on surprise; and acare did she give her hearers time to express their

tonishment, as she rapidly hurried them from the post-office to the lake, and thence to the church at Lorton, and the circumstances attendant on the scene in that sacred spot.

On the conclusion of Miss Howbiggen's narrative, there was a pause for a few moments, during which, as you might see by his countenance, the storm was gathering strength in Mr. Lawton's bosom, ere it gave itself vent in words. At length he exclaimed—

"The atrocious, outrageous rascal! So we have been harbouring no other than Hatfield-the notorious Hatfield-all this time. I am overwhelmed with astonishment !- the plausible villain !- the good-for-nothing, insinuating, too guilty, because too agreeable rascal !- the-the-" and here turning round to Laura, and witnessing, from the coming and fading hues on her cheek, the struggle that was passing in her bosom, he continued. "Ah, my dear child, I don't wonder at your being a little moved, -I too am moved, much moved. myself. To hold this person in the estimation I did. as a man of birth and distinction, and high character, and to witness with approbation the attentions he paid my daughter-all this may well move me as a father, to find how grossly I have been deceived, and my child's affections been tampered with."

But here poor Laura's feelings got the better of her, and despite all the endeavour to suppress them, especially in the presence of Miss Howbiggen, they found vent in the tears that forced themselves from her eyes. Her father meantime continued—

"Well, well, child! I don't wonder, I repeat, at your being a little moved,—so am I too; but every other feeling in your mind, no less than my own, must yield to indignation."

"Indifference, indifference,—say rather," replied Laura, as she stood looking out (or rather pretending to do so) at the window, endeavouring to conceal, as best she might, the conflict in her bosom, where the feelings of partiality that had been recently fostered battled hard against the condemnation that was now challenged to crush them. Little felt she the indifference she spoke of. She endeavoured, in continuation, to turn the course of remark from herself and her own feelings to those of another, for whom, as one of her own sex, and in a certain degree a sister sufferer on the present occasion, she might well feel, as she said, "And poor Gertrude! I am very sorry for her—very sorry."

"Ay, poor girl!" said Mr. Lawton, "I feel for her from my soul—to be the dupe of a swindler!"

"But then how could she suspect, under an ad-

dress so fascinating—so much that of apparent frankness—that any deceit could lurk?" replied Laura; and she added, like a true woman, "and then, she doubtless loved him—and was beloved too by him?"

"There is no palliation to be offered for the enormity which this accomplished scoundrel (as I must call him) has committed, in ruining poor Gertrude's peace and prospects!" replied Mr. Lawton, indignantly.

"Indeed, it is difficult to excuse him," interposed Miss Howbiggen, who had been for the last few moments a silent spectator of the effect produced by the purport of her intelligence, but now again found a tongue. "It is difficult to find any excuse for him, on the plea even of his great love for Gertrude."

"Then he did indeed love her?" asked Laura-

"So much so that he was blinded to every keener sense of the cruelty of his conduct, or if not blinded, at any rate too much overruled to be able to relinquish the possession of her. Poor, unhappy girl, I understand she is now delirious—dangerously ill—at Mr. Fenton's; she calls him her father, and he deserves the name, from the kindness with which I am told he is at present treating her. Poor thing! the story is melancholy!" and here she turned to Laura, "Yes, my

dear, I don't wonder at your being affected at the circumstances; young as you are, and alive to impressions, I don't wonder at your being a little moved, considering—"

And here was a pause for a moment or two. "But I will not dwell on the subject," she continued, seeing that her expression of sympathy, mistaken in judgment as it was, rather irritated than allayed the conflict that was still battling in her fair friend's bosom. "I will not, I repeat, dwell on the subject, or if I say a word more on it, it will be again and again to express my thankfulness to Heaven at the escape we have both had, in not being ourselves the victims of the arts of this accomplished juggler."

Laura's concern was too great to permit her to smile, which she otherwise must have done, at the innocent vanity of her elder maiden friend, in coupling them together, as objects of design as regarded their "attractions." Mr. Lawton, however, felt with full sincerity the self gratulation expressed by the amiable spinster, and swelled forth with due heartiness the chorus of her "oh! be joyful," as he exclaimed—

"You say rightly, Miss Howbiggen; the satisfaction we ought to feel at the escape we have had in not being linked with the 'kith and kin' of this too dexterous and plausible adventurer, should banish every more kindly and pleasing remembrance in his favour that might chance to whisper to us of the, certainly, agreeable society he afforded in himself. You say quite rightly !—we have had a great escape,—a merciful escape,—and I cannot be too thankful for it."

"Only fancy!" exclaimed Miss Howbiggen to Laura, and still amusingly keeping up the plural pronoun, "if we had not escaped—if either of us had in a hapless moment been led to the altar by this accomplished dissembler, what a number of titles or denominations we should have gained by this alliance! as many as the 'aliases' the gentleman has gone by—a catalogue as numerous property.

gained by this alliance! as many as the 'aliases' the gentleman has gone by—a catalogue as numerous, though not quite so distinguished, as an Austrian duchess's. Let me see—'we' might have boasted the names of Mrs. Hatfield, the Honourable Mrs. Manners, the Honourable Mrs. Hope, the Honourable Mrs. Renmore—bless me! we

And as she smiled in naming this 'honourable' catalogue, she tried to awaken a smile of cheerfulness, with her usual good nature, (for she had no malice at heart, or spirit of calumny in her gossipping characteristics,) on the brow of Laura. At the same time Mr. Lawton asked, "And pray what after all is the 'gentleman's' real name—his right designation?"

should have been overloaded with 'honours."

"That I can't tell," replied Miss Howbiggen; "for though it is generally supposed to be Hatfield, yet it is also said this name was merely that of a person who brought him up, and gave him the rudiments of that education which his own talent and love of mental improvement have since matured. The name of his parents he is said to have discarded, after having run away from them in early boyhood, and to have ever since called himself by the adopted one of 'Hatfield.' Such is the report, according to some!"

"The truth, however, must at no very great distance of time transpire," observed Lawton, "if, as you related to us, the officers of justice were so close upon him. Escape, one should think, must now be impossible."

"But he did escape, did he not?" asked Laura, eagerly, of Miss Howbiggen; "you did not say that he was actually taken?"

"No, not actually; but there appeared every probable chance that he speedily would be. Certain, however, it is, that when they fancied they had only a step or two round a corner to make, in order to secure him, he had suddenly disappeared."

"Delinquent as he may be, yet one is almost tempted to hope he may escape, he is so clever," said Laura. "Your sex is generous indeed, and forgiving," said Mr. Lawton; "but, really, though we sometimes feel inclined to hope that great ingenuity or cleverness, in its attempts at escape, may be successful, yet the danger to society in such a person as this being at large prevails in making us trust a stop may be put to his too-successful system of frauds. No; I cannot wish that he may escape,—he is no common delinquent."

"No," replied Miss Howbiggen; "an uncommon one; but, I dare say, by this time more news has been gleaned of his movements. I shall not pass through the village of Buttermere without ordering the carriage to stop while I make inquiries whether such is the case or not. I wish also to learn how poor Gertrude is—I trust, not worse!"

So saying, she rose from her seat in order to take her departure, having now fully accomplished her commission in coming to Blacktarn. Her budget of intelligence being emptied, she was forthwith animated with the laudable wish of putting, if she could, a new stock into it; so begging her friends Mr. Lawton and Laura to give herself and Mr. Howbiggen the pleasure of their company for a few days, whenever it should be convenient to them to come, in order that they might talk over all the interesting circumstances of which their neighbourhood had been the scene, she took her leave.

As she withdrew, she again begged Laura to think of "their happy escape, and not revert to any less welcome recollections; though it was no wonder she was at present a little moved, considering—"

Laura answered her by a faint smile, and felt no small relief when the door had closed on her talkative friend, who, in spite of the kindly and encouraging sympathies she had expressed, had been found on the present occasion a little too painfully communicative.

Though Laura felt no less than Miss Howbiggen that she had reason to congratulate herself on the "escape" upon which that lady had been so eloquent, yet it was difficult for her to divest herself at once of those feelings of interest which had been fostered in her bosom, and which might well be supposed to occasion her an additional struggle to that which she had already experienced. It was difficult, we repeat, to crush at once the feelings that had been suffered to gain, as we have witnessed, too much strength for her peace.

CHAPTER III.

"He prayeth best who loveth best;
For the dear God who loveth us,
He made and loveth all."
REYME OF THE ANCIENT MARINES.

Miss Howbiggen did not fail to institute the inquiries she had proposed making on her way through the village of Buttermere; but to her disappointment, nothing further could as yet be elicited, as regarded the fate of either the hero or heroine of the painful romance of which that neighbourhood had been the scene. She therefore proceeded home.

We, however, must linger on the spot, in order to bear witness to the sensation occasioned throughout the "villagerie" at the singular and bitter catastrophe that had taken place in the fortunes of its favourite, no less than "flower," Gertrude. There was but one feeling swayed the rude bosoms of its humble denizens. That of pain and regret that poor Gertrude should not have met with a better fate in the disposal of her hand. Such was the universal sentiment felt and expressed; her story, meantime, being dressed up with such adscititious colouring as is ever given by the rude lovers of the marvellous, in relating anything " new or strange."

Universal, did we call this feeling of kindly sorrow? Is it possible there could have been one who did not participate in it?—one, too, whom we should suppose ought to have felt it more poignantly than any of her neighbours? Is it possible, we ask, that in her bosom, anger and dissatisfaction at what she termed her "stiff-necked" child's want of duty and obedience to her wishes should have prevailed over those sentiments of regret and sorrow that every one besides herself experienced?

Such, however, was the case. Mrs. Wetherby was inflexible in her determination to steel her breast against "the disobedient generation," as she had learned to say, in the canting language of the conventicle. Thus did she evince how much a false sense of religion, so far from correcting and improving the heart, only renders it more harsh and ungenerous, in the sour dogmas, and austere no less than narrow prejudices, with which it warps the feelings. Mrs. Wetherby, however, in view-

ing the matter in the light she did, only considered, and certainly with due consistency, that she was acting according to the dictates of the most true spirit of religion.

Indeed, the best, most amiable, and most tolerating disposition naturally, could not fail of being warped and vitiated by a system of bigotry such as that to which dame Wetherby had for some time past subscribed. She did not, however, cherish sentiments so harsh, yet so strictly conformable to what she deemed religion, without finding that they were opposed by those who took a different view of both religion and feeling; who considered, in fact, that want of charity (to say nothing of maternal compunction) was not only repugnant to religion, but to nature. Her condemnation of the man, also, on whom her luckless daughter's affections and hand had been bestowed. was unlimited; but he, too, appeared to have some one to say a word for him, as will be more apparent from the following conversation.

"Ah! Mrs. Wetherby," said a venerable old man, who was seated opposite her, with a half-filled can in his hand, at the Traveller's Rest, "take my word for it, that what is a man's destiny there is no avoiding, do what you will. He was born to it—he was born to it; there's no avoiding a man's destiny."

"Mike, Mike—" for the reader has already perceived, from the tone of his observation, that it was Mike who had just addressed her, and whom she thought it prudent always to conciliate, being a little afraid of him—" what is the doctrine you advance? So you would attempt to excuse a man for his villany, by taking the blame off his shoulders, and making him the mere instrument of Fate?"

So said Mrs. Wetherby, whose "orthodoxy," shocked as it was by the tendency of the ancient mariner's remark, will, in this respect at least, find the balance of approval on her side, however much bigotry and false notions of religious duty might have generally warped her feelings in other respects, and as regards her daughter. Mike replied laconically—

"Ay, I would! A good deal!"

"A good deal, say you? You must place the blame entirely, or not at all, on this 'destiny' you speak of," said Mrs. Wetherby, sighing deeply, as expressive of her horror and dissent at the old seaman's words. "But you gentlemen of the sea are very superstitious, I am told, and so I don't much wonder at your speaking as you do. But for my part, I maintain that if we are free agents—"

"If!" interposed the heathenish mariner, chuckling forth the hypothetic monosyllable, as he glanced a look of mingled compassion and contempt at the demure and orthodox landlady. "I maintain," continued the dame, "that our own bad propensities—our own wilfully turning aside to deeds of vice and dishonour—make us iniquitous, and made this man so. I will not hear of his being forced into evil ways by untoward circumstances. I say, he might have eschewed evil," added the goodly dame, "if he had pleased. But no; he loved evil ways; and if he is to be hanged, as I nothing doubt but that he will, he deserves it richly."

She spoke with a fervour worthy the most enthusiastic tub-orator from the time of Prynne to that of Henley, and from Henley's to that of her friend the pseudo-preacher, Quandish.

"He is not," she continued, "in any way, that I see, to be exculpated—a good-for-nothing castaway!—the deceitful, 'painted-skinned' viper, ay, verily, that has stung us, when we cherished him even in our bosom!—the villain, I say!—the——"

"Fie! fie! Mrs. Wetherby! It is not for me, now your daughter lies ill and wretched, to say a word to vex your feelings. The Power of Mercy above us forbid! But it would be as well (pray excuse me, dame) to have a little more forbearing spirit towards the man on whom, at least, your daughter deeply and tenderly (although unhappily) placed her affections, though he might indeed be unfortunate."

" Unfortunate !--you astonish me Mike, to talk

so. What! does religion teach us to have forbearance for a villain like this?—you put me out of all patience!"

"What does the sacred Teacher himself say?" replied Mike, whose calmness of manner was singularly contrasted with the zealous and irate tone of the more orthodox disputant; and if the colour in her cheeks had been excited hitherto, it kindled into a yet deeper scarlet, as Mike continued, with a look of significance there was no mistaking,-"Why, he says, 'Let those who are without sin cast a stone.' I have said enough. The cases are not quite parallel, perhaps, but the general lesson is forbearance and kindness. Now, only think of your poor daughter, whom they say was positively frightened into this marriage with Hatfield, because she shuddered at the prospect to which she was being driven, of an alliance with that loathsome, insidious, reprobate, that yet more (to use your own figure) 'viper,' in the shape of man-that Quandish!"

"Mike!" interrupted the bigoted dame, "I will be obliged to you not to say (in my house, at least) a word against that good man, who has been doing yet more and more his duty, in endeavouring to apprehend a villain. Would he had been successful before the fatal meeting at the altar, between that criminal and a daughter of mine! As for her—never shall she enter these doors again!"

"And I am sure, Mrs. Wetherby," rejoined Mike, rising from his seat, "I never wish to enter them again, if you express yourself thus of your child! Look you, this is poor religion, for it is not charity! Who was there that did not love her? and who does not feel for her but-(I grieve I should be forced to say it)-but yourself? For so it should seem to me, to hear you talk thus. And you, a religious woman, too, and a 'meetinger!" he added, with a scornful laugh, while Mrs. Wetherby's choler rose still higher and higher, rather giving strength to the cause against herself than otherwise; since the sense of religion she exhibited, so far from partaking of the forbearance that more duly characterizes it, only evinced its worst feature, intolerance. And assuredly, if there are any who would have sided with her, a little while ago, in her opposition to Mike's doctrine of destiny, or fatality, the tables (it must now be confessed) were turned against her; and the old seaman's view of the question must be acknowledged the most reasonable, as well as the most feeling.

"It is the duty, I maintain," rejoined Mrs. Wetherby, "of every child to obey her parent. And it was her duty to have given her hand to the excellent person I had wished—not to the treacherous——"

[&]quot; Treacherous!" iterated Mike; " perhaps this

'excellent person,' as you call him, may one day be acknowledged by you as being as worthy the title 'treacherous' as the man you condemn! Possibly you may find he was the secret betrayer of a benefactor, and had been an accomplice; for which reason he was afraid of making a discovery of Hatfield in your house, lest he might be exposed himself; and then his game of endeavouring to win your daughter, while he made you a dupe, would have been cut short—ha, ha!"

The old man again laughed scornfully, while the dame, unable to refute her antagonist, was only able to tell him it was but slander he indulged in, as she added, "I will not believe anything so monstrous of that good man. And happy, too happy would it have been for Gertrude, had she been less of a 'stubborn one,' and listened unto my words."

"What!" replied Mike, who had now resumed for a moment longer his seat, since a new impulse had been given to the discussion; "would you have her give her hand even to an unexceptionable person, if her heart could not go with it? but to such a base being as this Simmonds—ay, that is his name, as you will one day learn—"

But here the old man involuntarily started as he saw, or fancied he saw, the effigies of the very being he was speaking of in terms of such just reprobation. For as his eye by chance glanced towards the casement, a face presented itself, peering through the little diamond-shaped panes, whose livid look and sordid traits, together with the sandy hair, freckled face, distorted mouth, sunken small fiery eyes that betokened a tiger-like cunning and ferocity, — that countenance yet more of mingled craft and ruffianism—all, all, betokened the demon-like and hateful traits of Simmonds, or Quandish. The face was instantly withdrawn as its glance was met by that of Mike, and on his hastening to the casement, he exclaimed—

"By heavens! it was the very miscreant of whom I was speaking, or these eyes are deceived. Mayhap, through the dimness of old age, I may have seen some other object—it appeared to me, however, to present the very effigies of the man you admire so, Mrs. Wetherby."

"What, Mr. Quandish, do you mean to say? call him not by such opprobrious terms. But no, it is impossible that you should have seen him; he is occupied in the good work of endeavouring to arrest the steps of a worthless criminal!"

"Well, I am astonished!" exclaimed Mike, turning from the window and resuming his seat. "Whoever the person was that I saw, he has disappeared; but I could have sworn it was the miscreant himself; for talk of a man, and he is sure to appear. The man makes me ill to look at him, if indeed it was he who was eaves-dropping at the

window. I don't wonder at poor dear Gertrude loathing the sight of such a being, whose Judas face one can't help turning from with disgust and misgiving. I don't wonder, I repeat, at her turning from him with terror, and the more so since in the person she did turn towards for stay and succour, poor thing, she saw all that a lass's eye might approve, and her heart too!"

"I must insist on hearing no more of this; if she is united to him, let me, at least, hear no more of it," said Mrs. Wetherby, waxing yet more warm. "As for me, I will not be seen to countenance such delinquency. Forbid it, Heaven, that I," she continued, in a genuine sanctimonious whine, "should hold up an encouragement to rebellious children to run in the face of parents."

"Ay, ay, Mr. Quandish has taught you the essence of religion, dame, I see, in these forbearing considerations," interposed Mike, while the irate landlady continued—

"And to think that you at your years should hold up so mutinous and wicked a doctrine! And to go on, too, trying to excuse that villain—why," she proceeded, as a perfectly novel after-thought suddenly suggested itself—"why, he owes me—this Colonel—a matter of, I dare say, thirteen pounds for rent, and things supplied while he was in this house,—not a penny of which I shall ever see, I will be bound for it."

Mike could scarcely repress the inclination towards risibility which he felt, at this real leaven of Mammon oozing out amidst so much pretended purity of religion and conscientiousness. All risible propensities, however, were checked by the indignation the generous old seaman felt at so much sordidness of spirit, that could manifest such soreness on a minor cause of complaint, while it pretended to be so absorbed in its pain and reprobation of a much greater and more serious one.

"You wished me gone a little while ago," he said, rising abruptly from his seat, as he placed his unfinished can on the table and knocked the light out of his pipe, together with its tobacco embers; "I shall not delay. What! do you talk of the paltry debt your son-in-law (for such he is) owes you?-nay, don't look so angry, dame; you must hear the name of 'son-in-law.' Why, set your heart at rest-I will pledge my faith for his paying you the sum. Heavens! what is religion-what is spiritual feeling, if it can't wean the mind from the hankering after a little worldly lucre it fears to lose, when matters so much more worthy its interest ought to be all in all to it-as a man should think? And I tell you again and again," he continued, as he advanced nearer the door, "the dear lass is much to be excused, much to be pitied, and so is the man to whom her destinies are united."

And so saying, and without waiting to hear any

further effusions of the landlady's wrath, the old man directed a glance of mingled scorn and indignation at her, and left the hostelrie.

On gaining the outside of the porchway, he looked round to see if he could discern anything more of the being he had taken for Quandish; but no form answering to that description presented itself, as the old man said to himself-"I must have been mistaken, I suppose; and the dame was right enough in reckoning that he was still on the pursuit of the boy," (for such was the designation that Mike occasionally, as we have heretofore witnessed, applied to Hatfield, from his remembrances of him as a child.) " May he escape-may he escape-is the prayer of old Mike. But it is in vain to hope it," muttered the old man, after a pause, and as he continued brooding over his thoughts-" in vain to hope it; but," he continued, as he struck the staff on which he leaned against the ground, "the miscreant that betrays him, that battens on the price of his blood,-let him beware how he crosses the path of old Mike !"

So saying, while a glow of fearful determination lit up his ghastly and withered features, the ancient mariner sought the solitary retreat of his rockhewn cell.

CHAPTER IV.

"Were every single instance of justice, like that of benevolence, useful to society, this would be a more simple state of the case, and seldom liable to great controversy."

HUME'S ESSAY ON MORAL SENTIMENT.

"To keep the same principle in view, the general good would require that we should surrender the robber to justice, though private scruples would admonish us not to break our word with him."

PALEY'S MORAL PHILOSOPHY.

Miss Howbiggen, in returning home, did not exactly find it, as Mr. Lillynore would say, "a bower of roses!" In a word, she was doomed to encounter, without compunction on his part, the sour triumph and raillery which her amiable brother evinced at the "distinguished guest," about whom she had made "such a fuss," having turned out a mere adventurer, and an object of legal pursuit. In fact, the strain of satirical taunt which we remember his indulging subsequently to the "post-office" discovery had flowed on, unabated, nay increased, ever since.

"He, he, he!" chuckled out the cynic; "I told

you, you could never know what people might turn out to be."

"You may amuse yourself as you please," replied the forbearing Hetty, "but it is utterly unjust your pretending to flatter yourself, by laying claim to having suspected anything wrong about the person that was lately our guest; and if you said anything to me in disparagement of him, or to the purport you now express, it arose merely from a love of wilful contradiction of myself, and from no other cause whatsoever."

To this very just reasoning it did not suit Mr. Howbiggen to listen, as he continued to amuse himself in the indulgence of his peculiar vein of sour raillery.

"The estate in Caithness—he, he! I dare say, Hetty, you could place your finger on the precise spot in the map where it is!"

"Amuse yourself, Mr. Howbiggen, as you think fit; but I will maintain, that if you had one spark of the amiability—ay, and brilliancy—that this unfortunate person has, you might consider yourself with much greater respect than you are at present entitled to do."

An indignant toss of the head and glance of reproach accompanied these words, with the due dignity Miss Hetty Howbiggen knew so well to assume. Verily, she was much vexed; but she was destined to be more so, as her brother still applied the goad to her patience.

"He, he, he!—the Honourable M.P.!—Renmore, of Clan-renmore!—he, he !"

"Yes," exclaimed Hetty, her voice being raised to a half scream under the irritation occasioned by this provoking chuckle,—"yes, Mr. Howbiggen, you might consider yourself fortunate if you possessed this ill-fated person's agreeable and engaging address, and the enlarged, humane, and liberal sentiments he ever used to express. It is a great pity indeed he is situated as he is."

"I told you how it would be," rejoined her brother, after giving vent to his merriment in a laugh, which, however, induced a fit of coughing; "but-but-ugh, ugh, ugh !--you see you never listen to my words. Now, let me give you a piece of advice once for all: never think of admitting any one into your house of whom you know nothing, however agreeable or engaging his address, manners, and conversation, may be. But, like all women,-ugh, ugh-you only look at objects as they please you, without considering how far good or safe they may be. Just as that Doctor Esdaile, with his Code de Santé, declares that your liking a viand is a proof it agrees with you, and therefore, concludes this sage epicurean and dialectician, it is wholesome!" And having delivered himself as well as his cough would let him, the cynic muttered out, or rather chuckled out, "Renmore, of Clan-Renmore!—he, he, he!—M.P., et cetera."

"Dear, dear! how provoking this useless gibe is!" exclaimed Hetty.

"I always thought it looked odd and suspicious, his being so backward to accept the various invitations offered him, and his sculking about the meerbanks and tarns, with a fishing rod in his hand, by way of excuse, as it appears now, for keeping to himself, and out of the way of people—I thought it seemed odd and strange!"

"Now, you never thought any such thing, Mr. Howbiggen!" exclaimed his sister, with all the confidence of truth lighting up at once her brow, and giving vigour to her utterance; "for what was it you used to say to me, when I—yes I, said the conduct you specify was suspicious? Why, you used to cut me short by saying, 'Pooh! he is quite right to keep to himself; he does not wish to be "bored!" Yes, such was your elegant expression, and such your argument. But really, Mr. Howbiggen, you had better not talk, or exert your voice any more, for it only brings on a fit of coughing."

"Ay, this odious, detestable cold and cough, or, at any rate, an aggravation of them, are all I gained by going to that vile regatta. I wish I had

stayed at home; but a man can never do as he pleases—he is dragged here, and dragged there, and dragged everywhere, at the caprice of others! I went to please, not myself—Lord, no!—but you!"

This amiable speech was terminated by another fit of coughing, which prevented the ascetic sufferer from hearing Hetty's reply, that he had caught the cold previously to going to the "vile regatta," as he called it.

In this agreeable, amiable course did the stream of domestic life flow on for some days at Howbiggen house, or rather the "villa Howbiggen," it should be more properly as well as classically called. At the expiration of this interval, the period had arrived when Mr. Lawton was expected, with his daughter, according to the invitation which Miss Howbiggen had so kindly given them. Mr. Lawton accordingly arrived, but unaccompanied by his daughter, whom he described as having been considerably indisposed, but was now better, though not quite well enough to accompany him on his visit.

Laura had, in fact, been more indisposed than she was willing to acknowledge to her father; but under the superintendence of Dr. Esdaile, whom we remember being sent for from Windermere to Blacktarn, she had rallied; and her physician, though he had left her much better, did not remit as yet

paying visits to his fair acquaintance and patient, about whom we are sure he felt no common interest.

After Miss Howbiggen's kind inquiries concerning Laura's health, and the expression of her regret that she had been unable to accompany Mr. Lawton to see them, her amiable brother greeted his Blacktarn guest in his usual style of sour banter.

"Well, Mr. Lawton, how go on the improvements that Colonel Renmore, your late 'distinguished guest' (he, he!) was to have given you so much precious advice about? He, he!—ugh, ugh!—he!"

The lord of Blacktarn, regarding our ascetic as a privileged person, smothered the impatience which raillery on so sore a point would have provoked, had it proceeded from any one else, and replied with all his usual solemnity—

"The improvements,—hah! Oh, thank you; they go on very well. And as for the person of whom you speak, and who was your late guest no less than my own,—why, all I can say is, that condemn him as I must, yet I regret he did not turn out to be the person I at first took him for;—ahem!—as it is, I believe, wiser persons than myself would have been taken in."

"To be sure, to be sure!" interposed, seriously, Miss Howbiggen.

"Ya-as, wiser persons than myself would have vol. III.

been taken in by his superior address and manner. And—ahem !—I may add, I was more willing to make advances towards his acquaintance, from the circumstance—ahem !—of meeting him in such society as your own and Miss Howbiggen's!"

"The inviting him was her doing," growled out Mr. Howbiggen, "not mine!—ugh, ugh, ugh!"

The energy of his "disclaimer" here brought on a fit of coughing, which having at length subsided, Howbiggen continued, "I remember, by-the-bye, on the occasion of your meeting him at dinner here, Mr. Lawton, the fellow had the impudence to lay you a bet—he, he, he!—that 'Hatfield' would forge your hieroglyphic of an autograph. To think it was himself all the while that was speaking, and not a soul suspected him!"

Meanwhile, as the cynic was speaking, Mr. Lawton was proceeding, with a solemn smile on his countenance, to take from his pocket a packet containing two letters.

"What have you there?" asked Miss Howbiggen, with the laudable curiosity that characterized her.

Mr. Lawton, in reply to the cynic and his sister as well, answered, "Yes,—ahem !—I do remember the circumstance you mention; and these letters," he added, turning to the interesting and inquiring Hetty, "will demonstrate with respect to this same bet, that this prince of tricksters not only made it, but has won it!"

"Is it possible?" exclaimed Miss Howbiggen;
"oh, pray let us hear the letters!—I am most
curious to hear them!"

One of them I received by the Cockermouth cross post, and the other is marked with the Nottingham post-mark. The first is from my banker at Cockermouth, and runs thus,—ahem!—

" SIR,

"As it is not usual for you to draw upon us for so large an amount as that mentioned in the enclosed draft, after the regular half-yearly sum is drawn out by you, and the books made up, we thought it right to transmit the enclosed to you, in order to learn whether there has been any mistake committed in our honouring it. At the same time, our clerks having not the slightest doubt but that the hand-writing was your own, being so peculiar in its character, they were justified in honouring the cheque. The writing appears certainly, and upon repeated examination, to be yours; at least we are unable to detect any counterfeit; but as there are reports that you have become acquainted, together with other gentlemen in the neighbour-

hood, with the notorious Hatfield, under the name of Renmore, our minds misgave us, and we thought we would lose no time in ridding ourselves of an uncertainty so unpleasant. If it should turn out that we are right in suspecting some fraud, no time shall be lost on our part in endeavouring to apprehend the offender.

"We are, Sir,
"Your obliged, obedient servants,
"MARKS AND CO."

"Charming!—he, he, he!" chuckled and exclaimed by turns the cynic, to think how "neatly" his poor neighbour of Blacktarn had been duped. "There can be no uncertainty in the matter,—he, he! Well, now for the other letter—from whom is that pray?—the gentleman himself, perhaps, eh? —candidly acknowledging his dexterity,—he, he, he!"

"Indeed, you are right!" replied Mr. Lawton, not entering quite so warmly into the spirit of the joke as his "friend" Howbiggen.

"Admirable impudence !-he, he!" exclaimed the ascetic, coughing and laughing by turns.

"Well, I'm sure!" said Miss Howbiggen, turning up the whites of her eyes in interesting amazement.

"Well, let us hear the letter—the best joke I ever heard in my life !-ugh, ugh, he, ugh, ugh !"

Accordingly, Mr. Lawton, bridling himself up, and putting the best face he could on a matter where he was obliged to acknowledge how completely he had been fooled, proceeded, with an "ahem" or two, to read the following:—

" My DEAR SIR, "Having left-"

"' My dear Sir!'—Capital!" interrupted Howbiggen. "Forgive me for interrupting, but I could not for the life of me help it. This Colonel Renmore, or whatever he calls himself, would relieve one from despair even!—he is a very prodigy to excite merriment! On my word, he eclipses every adventurer I ever heard of yet, for cool impudence and polite address,—eh, Hetty?—the very Brummell of swindlers!"

Mr. Howbiggen having thus relieved himself of this piece of half comment, half banter, permitted his sage friend Lawton to proceed with the epistle.

"Having left the neighbourhood of the lakes under circumstances which doubtless appear embarrassing and against me, and being uncertain whether I shall have the pleasure of meeting you again, I thought it but considerate to address

[&]quot; MY DEAR SIR,

a line to you; in fact, I write to let you know that, in consequence of a slight 'stake' there was between us, concerning the feasibility of one Mr. Hatfield's conquering the difficulty of imitating your signature, I was induced to avail myself of that gentleman's address in trifles of this kind, to accomplish the object in dispute. Happy am I to inform you that he completely succeeded, making me the winner of the bet, the amount of which (in order to relieve you of the trouble of transmitting it to me, or my bankers) I applied for to Messrs. Marks and Co. of Cockermouth.

"Thinking there was another little affair connected with the rather hardy proceeding of riding off with Miss Lawton, which turned out also a successful bet in my favour, I considered it as well to add the amount of this last transaction to that of the first; so that much unnecessary trouble has been saved, by making one account of the two transactions, which are now entirely settled, by the cheque for £600, which Messrs. Marks obligingly honoured at my hands. With compliments, and best respects to Miss Lawton,

" Believe me,

" My dear Sir,

"Yours very faithfully,

4 J. H."

"Why, this is better and better!" exclaimed Mr. Howbiggen, with difficulty having restrained his impatience to pay his due tribute of marvel to the roguish accomplishments of the writer of this epistle.

"Why, what is this new bet?" inquired Miss Howbiggen,—when both herself and her brother were relieved of their curiosity by Lawton's informing them, with a marvel equal to their own, that the light had now burst in upon him. "Good heavens!" he added, "to think that it was my 'distinguished guest' himself that galloped off with the girl!—Ay, he played the same trick, now I remember, in Devonshire, and in Ireland too:—if I had thought of that——"

"If!" interrupted Howbiggen, "—ay, but you did not—here is the art of the fellow, in throwing you off your guard! But let us hear the story of the 'abduction.'"

Accordingly, Mr. Lawton briefly mentioned the circumstances, with which the reader has been long ago acquainted, and was proceeding to utter a pompous "Jeremiad" on the loss of a fine stack of a new kind of clover, in the fire that took place on the evening of the abduction, and the sowing which had been a favourite experiment of his in agriculture,—when he was mercilessly cut short by Howbiggen, and his attention recalled to the letter.

"By heavens! it is the most amusing communication, and most characteristic, too, I ever had the pleasure of hearing—he! he! What say you, Hetty, eh?"

"Indeed I rarely remember anything to equal it as a piece of assurance," replied that judicious and discriminating lady.

"To rob me, and then venture to write to inform me he has done so!—it is a piece of 'assurance' indeed, or scoundrelism if you please, that has no parallel."

"Vastly considerate of him to relieve you of the trouble of sending him the money!" observed Mr. Howbiggen, citing the terms of the letter.

"Ay," replied Lawton; "if he had not paid himself (which he took good care to do), he might have won fifty bets of me, but never should have seen a sixpence in payment."

"Nay, there you would be wrong," rejoined Howbiggen, continuing his somewhat unpalatable banter; "for he has fairly won the bets, there can be no doubt."

"What!—ahem!" exclaimed Lawton, opening wide his eyes in surprise. "What! is a bet fairly won which was won through a manœuvre—a ruse—against the laws of the land?"

" Of course he has a right to be paid the bet, though you may also have him hanged for the forgery-to confine myself to the 'fac-simile' affair of your handwriting."

"For shame, Mr. Howbiggen!" interposed the more scrupulous Hetty; "this is only arguing for the sake of contradiction."

"My dear Sir," said Lawton, with amusing solemnity, "you don't really mean to assert, that if a swindler cajoles me into laying a bet with him, which he is to win by perpetrating a crime, I am bound in honour or justice to pay him?" and here he opened his eyes, and looked first at Mr. Howbiggen, and then at Hetty.

"To be sure you are," replied Howbiggen; the subject of the bet is not the fact of crime, but of counterfeit. The only question is, has the counterfeit been successfully performed or not? The fact to be hazarded according to the terms of the wager has been accomplished; whether it wear a criminal complexion or not in the eyes of society does not alter the circumstance of its accomplishment."

"My dear Sir," again iterated the "astonied" lord of Blacktarn; while Miss Howbiggen exclaimed—

"My dear Tobias, how can you persist in maintaining such a position!" and then in an under tone she added to Lawton, "Never mind what he says, he does not mean it." "But I beg your pardon, I do mean it! for now," he continued, turning to Lawton, " supposing the name to be counterfeited had not been your own, but some third person's, and you had laid a wager on the circumstance of its counterfeit being a feasibility or not; well, if the attempt had been successful, and the feasibility proved, you would have been entitled to win had you wagered on that side. The mere question is-the feasibility. Yet more; even suppose you had laid a wager that a man on the highway would cut a throat the same night-if he does so, you are entitled to win. It matters not that the man deserves hanging for doing so; or that the subject which the bet regards is abstractedly criminal or not. The feasibility is the only thing to be considered, as far as affects the bet or its claim to validity."

"And this is your real opinion?" asked Lawton, still gaping with surprise.

"Of course it is; and any candid reasoner would agree with me. It is consistent with the strictest rules of moral justice, right reason, and logic to boot."

"For shame! for shame!" said Miss Howbiggen; "pretty logic, indeed!—you make Mr. Lawton quite angry."

"Oh, not at all-not at all!" replied Lawton, endeavouring to maintain his composure as well as

he could, the rubicund hues, meantime, which his choler had flushed his face withal bespeaking how really provoked he was: "Oh dear no!—never was more cool—more amused in my life!" he added; "but I confess I do not admire being quite argued out of my wits,—ahem!"

"He, he, he!" giggled out his antagonist;
but you must be so, I fear, in the present instance, my good friend; and I think the Jockey Club would side with me."

"I know not what the Jockey Club would decide; but I know which side the law would take," exclaimed Mr. Lawton.

"Well; the gallant 'Colonel' will have law enough, I dare say," replied Mr. Howbiggen, "to satisfy all the good folks he has ever exercised his ingenuity upon. At any rate, he has not taken me in."

"That may be," observed Lawton; "but you may yet live to be his dupe should you ever fall in his way again, or have an opportunity of doing so."

"He, he, he!—ugh, ugh!" was the only answer of old Howbiggen, coughing and laughing by turns; the former affection, however, at length predominating over the last so seriously, that Miss Howbiggen was quite alarmed as she exclaimed, "What a dreadful fit! this is worse than ever I remember it."

Even Lawton, nettled as he had been at the gibes of the cynic at his expense, forgot his impatience, in the concern he now expressed, at witnessing so serious an attack, and withdrew for the present, while Miss Howbiggen, like a careful sister, poured out some "emulgent draught" or other, prepared by her own hands for the invalid.

All, however, she gained by her attention was the following memento, on the part of her cynical brother, on his recovering his power of utterance: "Ay, this accursed cold and cough I have to thank you for. That 'gadding' on the lake, to please you, has done it all. That this cough will be the death of me I am certain. Would to Heaven I had stayed at home and never come (all through your recommendation, mind) to this vile, dampaired, watery, cough-provoking, tarn-swamped district! I am determined to go back as soon as possible."

"Well, well, my dear Tobias, be easy! You shall go back as soon as you please. I am sure I never recommended your coming here without considering that the beauty of the scenery would be of infinite service in interesting and relieving your mind and spirits. But pray do not blame me for being the cause of the cough."

"There, now, you will only be irritating me, and bringing it on again by contradicting me,"

replied her amiable brother; so the prudent Hetty was willing for once to give up the argument.

With respect to the impatience now evinced by Mr. Howbiggen to return home, she was not unwilling to humour his proposal to that effect, since the dreams she had fondly indulged in at one time, of possibly "altering her maiden condition," and adjourning still further north, to the highland neighbourhood of "Clan-renmore," with a certain gallant colonel, were now all dissipated in empty air! Never had there been in her experience a more complete chateau en Espagne than this "Colonel's" castle in "Caithness."

Nay, when she considered how constantly the thought was recurring in the present spot of her abode, how much deceived and duped she and every one else at it had been, the reflection was so little flattering to her self-love that she soon became as warm an advocate for quitting it as her impatient brother could be. It was therefore not many days subsequently to the departure back to Blacktarn of their worthy guest, Mr. Lawton, (who stayed but a very short time with them, anxious as he was to return to his daughter,) that they took their leave of the lake country, Miss Howbiggen declaring "that but for circumstances, their sojourn there would have been delightful."

Previously to her departure, she had not failed to send repeatedly down to the village, to inquire if any additional tidings had reached it regarding either Hatfield or his ill-fated bride. With respect to the first, she was made acquainted that Mrs. Wetherby had received a letter bearing the very same date as that addressed to Lawton, and inclosing that dame the amount due to her of the thirteen pounds at the dreaded loss of which she had been so sore.

Mike's prediction to her to that effect was verified, to her surprise, much earlier than even he could have supposed. Not only was the amount due inclosed, but a balance over, far exceeding the interest of the sum, as a consideration for its nothaving been settled sooner.

There was also added in the letter a confirmation of Mike's account of Quandish, which first awakened a doubt in her mind whether she had not indeed been made a dupe by the pseudopreacher, though it by no means convinced her to that effect; such was the blind confidence and reliance she had been accustomed to place in that saintly hypocrite, and which was difficult to be shaken. There were also in the letter expressions of the deepest affection for her daughter, accompanied by those of the most painful regret; but so far from softening her feelings either towards the writer or Gertrude, this topic did but lead back the obdurate and prejudiced dame to the condemnation of the man who had instigated her daughter's disobedience.

In occasioning this last result, the letter totally destroyed any whisperings of better consideration for the writer which the disbursement of the thirteen pounds had suggested.

Such were the news concerning Hatfield which came to the ears of Miss Howbiggen. As to the recent village preacher, Quandish, she heard none, but that his late "congregation" had looked for him at the dissenting chapel in vain. We may be permitted to add, that having pursued his enemy with the officers of justice northward as far as Carlisle, he had returned with them, having been taught by that time that their pursuit was hopeless. On their return they took their way through Buttermere, and Quandish had lagged behind, hesitating with himself whether he should pay dame Wetherby a visit and practise on her credulity and misplaced confidence in him, to draw upon her purse.

It was, in fact, during this moment of hesitation and uncertainty that he looked through the casement of the hostelrie, as already described; so that old Mike was not deceived in fancying he had caught a glimpse of this being. The appearance of the old mariner, however, had discomfited Quandish much more than Mike had, on his part, been discomfited at seeing Quandish; for this base character well knew that Mike would by this time have exposed his infamy to dame Wetherby, in the course of those discussions which the circumstance of his being the chief pursuer of Hatfield would necessarily occasion.

He therefore, on seeing old Mike, whom of all men he dreaded, shrunk back, and speedily, no less than stealthily, skulked away to join his companions, the officers, on their way onwards towards London. He considered that his "occupation," like Othello's, being gone at Buttermere, and the game, as regarded Mrs. Wetherby's daughter, being up, it would be of little avail for him to remain there as a preacher, since he might preach elsewhere, and pocket more pence in places where the population was larger. Besides, he dreaded the effects of Mike's exposing his character to the duped villagers.

On all these accounts, he deemed it advisable to think no more of Buttermere; but on the contrary, to look forward with alacrity to adjourning to the metropolis, since that was the scene, he considered, to which an accomplished adventurer, such as Hatfield, was most likely to shift his quarters. Nay; this had been the scene on a former occasion of his enterprises; it was as well, therefore, to look to the chance of tracing him through the mazes of this great arena of human action and human "expedient," or knavery, as anywhere else.

Confirmed by the myrmidons of justice, his companions, in this reasoning, he continued his journey with them onwards to the mighty modern Babel.

By a different route, but to the same goal, did our friends Mr. and Miss Howbiggen urge their journey also; the former dissatisfied with everything, and coughing, grumbling, and muttering discontented musings throughout the whole route. The only circumstance that appeared at all to amuse him was the thought how "poor Lawton" had been cozened out of his cash.

This reflection awakened a sour smile on the pale thin lips of the cynic. As for Miss Howbiggen, she had contented herself with having gleaned the latest intelligence that could be obtained of the matters concerning which she had sent to inquire.

With respect to her inquiries concerning the state of Gertrude, as she had not received any answer or information of a more favourable character, it becomes our duty no longer to delay satisfying the reader's not unkindly curiosity on this subject in at once proceeding to Lorton.

Thither, then, our next chapter calls us, and there Gertrude had been, under the fostering and paternal care of the "good curate," from the period when we last took leave of her.



CHAPTER V.

" His words disturb'd her soul with pity. All thoughts, all passions, all regrets; Whatever stirs this mortal frame: All are but ministers of love. And feed his sacred flame. I calm'd her fears, and she was calm."

COLERIDGE.

IF Mr. Lawton and dame Wetherby had received remembrances from our hero, it may well be imagined that the person who was dearest to his heart would from other and stronger causes not be left without one. Accordingly, after the lapse of little more than a fortnight from the period of the inauspicious nuptials, a letter was delivered by the postman, addressed to the " Rev. John Fenton." On opening it, the good curate found a note for himself, accompanied also by a letter for Gertrude. It ran as follows :-

" My DEAREST LOVE,

"I can well imagine the surprise and dismay which the strange and unfortunate occurrences that marked the morning of our nuptials must have occasioned you. Banish the remembrance of them, dearest, from your mind, and confide in the honour, love, and sincerity of one who is devoted to you—of one who is linked to you by all laws, divine and human; and who is yet more, not only determined to make you ample amends for all you have suffered on his account, but trusts to live with you in honour, security, and happiness.

"It is impossible for me in the limits of a letter to enter into a full explanation of the cruelty, and injustice, I may add, of which I am the victim. Were you to know more fully than I have heretofore hinted, that my persecution arises from the selfishness and ingratitude of our common bane, Quandish, and, that culpability less really attaches to me than to this basest of human beings, you would, I am confident, acquit me. The benign Mr. Fenton, and the no less benevolent Golefield, would, I am sure, feel for my situation, and make allowances for it.

"When we meet, be assured there is no single passage in my life that shall not be laid fully and explicitly before you. It will at present gratify you, my dearest Gertrude, to know that I am in safety and honour, and only wait till I am sufficiently secure in circumstances by the honourable occupation I have been fortunate enough to obtain, to retire with you from out of the reach of my enemies. At present, though I long to see you, to throw myself at your feet, and implore your forgiveness and forbearance for what has passed, yet it is some consolation to me in absence, to feel that in being under Mr. Fenton's roof, you are with one who loves and cherishes you as his own child.

"This consideration relieves me of much uneasiness which would otherwise be occasioned me,
under the apprehension lest you might be without
that care and attention which I fear you must
have required, in consequence of the events of that
ill-fated morning when I was forced from you.
Forget those painful circumstances, I again adjure
you. I repeat, that all that appears at present so
much against me shall be removed, and satisfactorily accounted for.

"If ever, my dearest Gertrude, you have seen a shadow of gloom on my countenance, detected heaviness at my heart, and have been able to banish any unpleasant apprehensions these appearances of conscious pain might have occasioned,—if ever, through my assurances, you have looked, once again, on me with confidence, cheerfulness, and love—do so now! Now, oh, now, look compassionately on me, when more than ever the thought of your renewed cheerfulness, confidence, and love will assure me in the hopes I have expressed, that we shall ere long meet and yet be happy."

The note to Mr. Fenton, that accompanied this letter, ran, to a certain extent, in a strain somewhat similar, (as in the nature of things it would,) as far as regards the exculpation of the writer, and his deprecation of the worthy curate's condemnation of him, in consequence of the fearfully questionable appearances that invested his character. It went on further to thank him, with feelings of the deepest gratitude, for the kindness he had shewn, or should shew to Gertrude.

"Even were I the greatest reprobate on earth, (the note proceeded to say,) instead of being—as I hope to prove to you one of these days—a most injured and unfortunate man, entrapped and forced into calamities,—even, I say, were I the greatest delinquent on earth, yet, believe me, I loved her with no base or ungenerous design! My love was returned; and when our marriage was proposed, it was to rescue her from addresses that were loath-some to her, as indeed you are already aware. To have broken off our union would therefore have rendered her wretched. Consider, then, the struggle I must have endured when any whisperings warned

me to break it off! At the time our union was first proposed, danger stood aloof from; me it had been averted.

"The return of persecution was directed not more against myself than her. No love of justice on the part of my betrayer, no criminality on my part, urged it. No; it was malice, merely, against myself and her. Had not this persecution been thus maliciously renewed, I had entertained every fair prospect of our retreating to live in security after our marriage; and even with these encouraging hopes, honour whispered to me to desist from the step we both were anxious to take-nor did the struggle of my love for her, combat these whisperings so much as the thought of her love for me-and the pain that would be occasioned her by my standing aloof from the completion of our mutual hopes and wishes. Compassionate, then, not only the struggles I have endured, but acknowledge with that candour and benevolence that characterize you, how little the persecution I have undergone has arisen from any conscientious motives on the part of my betrayer.

"I know you will feel for me. I know the kind-hearted Golefield, too, (and to whose benevolence I now also appeal,) will feel for me on all the accounts I have stated. Plead for me, dear Sir, to him. I respect his opinion, and wish to

stand excused by him, next to yourself, above all other men.* Even should these words be unavailing, and you should still turn away from me unconvinced and unforgiving—yet know, I should still revere, respect, and love you. Gertrude can tell you this.

"What secret and unexplained causes I have for thus expressing myself, time will sooner or later disclose. At present, with any unfavourable opinions of me which you might entertain, I should only be embittering your feelings by any such disclosure. This I have not the callousness to do. Believe me, dear Sir, I may be an unfortunate, but never was a bad man. Culpable I may have been, but not naturally depraved; and whatever my destinies may be—however bitter, however unhappy—the world will, I think—I trust—not let my name be utterly condemned."

"What can he mean?" said Fenton, as he read and re-read the paragraph which expressed so much of feeling—of affection—for himself. A surmise arose in his mind, which was however quickly banished from it, as the words escaped his lips hastily—"Impossible!" And then he

^{*} A curious "fact" this in our hero's history. He shrunk in shame, in this quarter, while in others, he shewed his usual address and assurance. See, too, his letters to the Rev. Mr. Nicholson, as Colonel Hope.

turned his attention to the consolation which he thought might be afforded poor Gertrude from both the communications received. In his usual bland and forgiving manner, he endeavoured to assure her mind and strengthen her hope, "that all might yet be explained, all might yet be happier than past appearances had warranted—that the best of us suffer sometimes under adverse circumstances, and are unable to make good our assurances of uprightness, in the face of suspicion, prejudice, and persecution!"

These words were not without their effect, and by the kindness of Fenton, she gradually rallied from the severe shock she had sustained. The vigour of youth, buoyant and fresh as her native mountain breezes, upheld her, and aided her progress towards recruital. The resources of her constitution supplied their means of restitution and health, even as the pure salient springs that feed and nourish the thirsty summer valleys. Her heart had not yet arrived, either, at that bitter experience which betokens, by its sinking, that it knows all hope is crushed, and that to rally is but a bootless struggle.

Her confiding spirit turned with willingness to her husband's (for such he was) remonstrances; her love pictured him speaking, nor could she turn a deaf ear to the voice. Her heart strongly aided the effort towards consoling her, afforded by the kind representations of Fenton.

It was thus he reasoned with himself, in offering them to her:- "At any rate," he considered, "if any fearful truth comes to light which may exhibit eventually the most disastrous consequences as regards her husband, yet it is of little avail to anticipate the misery she must then feel. Let her receive consolation and respite if she may, and while she may; let her raise the head and smile through a brief day of hope, if brief indeed it is doomed to be. If the danger and guilt that haunt his path shall be cleared off, and his hopes be realized of escaping to live with her in security, why, I shall have been glad, in that event, that I did not occasion her any unnecessary state of previous suffering. No, no; pain sways too much, in this state of probation-life! Let us snatch a respite from it while we may."

Such were the benign considerations that influenced Fenton's efforts in restoring Gertrude's peace of mind; nor were his efforts, truly paternal as they were, without effect; and with her peace of mind and improved state of spirits, her health and vigour of frame were also gradually amended. Love and hope, too, secretly glowed in her bosom, and forbade her to despond.

With respect to Fenton's feelings as regarded

her husband, there was something in that person that had engaged the good curate more than ordinarily. There was a deference, an affection, in Hatfield's manner towards him, that had interested him in his behalf, with almost a paternal feeling, he knew not why. There was a respectful tenderness in his manner, beyond that of any mere ordinary wish to please, or the mere address of common courtesy.

This impression in Fenton's mind, together with the expressions in the letter addressed to him, occasioned him, when he called them into consideration, and thought of them together, a certain degree of curiosity and surmise, as we have already witnessed, that were inexplicable to him. He could not, we repeat, help feeling a strong interest for Hatfield, whatever might be the circumstances in which he was placed; and while he studied to soothe Gertrude in suggesting the hope that all might yet be happy, he spoke no less the secret wishes of his own heart.

Scarcely less than himself was the benevolent bard Golefield interested for Gertrude; nor had he been forgetful, since his return to Keswick, of the kind declaration we remember his making to Woodsland, whom he had left at Grasmere, of coming to Lorton and offering what "spirit-balm" he might to the ill-fated bride. Her beauty, and the vexatious importunities she had been constrained to fly from, to the alliance she had made, strongly interested his feelings in her behalf.

"No wonder," he would say, "she should have been glad to marry a person of the appearance, address, and amiability, too, of Hatfield. Poor girl! Well, I'll just step in and see my worthy neighbour Fenton, and take a turn with him up and down the lawn in front of the parsonage house, or near my favourite 'Lorton' yew,' which might have inspired Young with grand and gloomy associations, enough for another 'Night Thoughts,' "

So saying, would the bard, since we last met him, often step aside as he passed (which he frequently did) through the village of Lorton, in those romantic wanderings which it was his pleasure to pursue through the wilds around. And the good curate was not permitted to want a coadjutor in his endeavours to win his lovely ward (for so he considered her) back to the recovery of her wonted peace of mind. On the present occasion, Fenton shewed his friend the letters received from Hatfield, and asked him what he thought of them.

Golefield read them, and after musing, he shook his head, as he replied, when Gertrude left the room—

^{*} See note, supra, vol. ii, p. 289.

"I fear there is too much mystery and too little explicitness, too much of profession, (however plausible and sanguine its expression,) ever to let us believe that all can be cleared away as we could wish. However, I no less sincerely wish it may be. For if ever man was formed to engage the interest and esteem of society on his side, as far as social bearing goes, it is this man. I doubly hope he may be safe yet, both for his own and the poor 'Beauty's' sake; but—"

"But what?" asked Fenton, seeing there was something of hesitation in the bard's manner.

"Why, you are aware of what old Mike says," continued Golefield, as he walked out on the lawn, accompanied by the curate.

"No; besides, who does not know Mike's superstitious character? He is never without some omen or fable. He is a sort of walking 'destiny' in the neighbourhood!"

"Ay, I believe Mike may be a little superstitious, like the rest of his sea-fraternity; but it certainly has struck me as singular, his applying (for I could not mistake the significance of his manner) the tale of the Egyptian and the child at sea to Hatfield. Routhmore and myself heard the tale one day at the old man's cell."

"Yes, yes,-I have heard it."

" And when we remarked how increased its sin-

gularity and interest would b Hatfield, the old man made r of a significant look, which w tending to say that the child Hatfield himself."

"Indeed, it is a singular st the circumstance of the child be parents, as well as the subseq tains. You give it a new com it to Hatfield. It seems, in partake much of the charac prediction addressed by the g though Mike's fancy has rend to the events of this story? for it was conveyed back to its parents, certainly, after this earlier loss of it, according to Mike."

- "Was it indeed! do you know that?—" asked Golefield.
- "I suppose so," said Fenton, hesitatingly. "In fact, Mike's account says so."
 - "True, true !"
 - "But what was its subsequent history?"
- "I know not; whatever it was, however, I believe old Mike kept his eye on the child, marking every step it took on life's way, as following the track its destinies (as the old mariner will have it) pointed out. It was 'doomed,' he says, to desert the safeguard of its home, in its progress towards its inevitable end."
- "Desert its home, said you?" observed Fenton, turning suddenly to Golefield, as a momentary paleness overspread his cheek, and the words "singular coincidence" escaped his lips, as well as Golefield's ear could distinguish their purport.
- "What was it you remarked?" asked Golefield.
- "Oh, nothing only there were circumstances that suggested to me a singular coincidence with those of Mike's story; but that son died," he added to himself, "there can scarcely be a doubt."

Golefield did not catch the purport of this last remark, but merely observed generally—

"Ay, ay! those 'strange coincidences' are, be assured, something more than mere casualties, and I could say much—"

But here the conversation was broken in upon by the not unwelcome occasion of the entrance of Dr. Esdaile, who had been as unremitting in his medical attendance on Gertrude as on the heiress of Blacktarn. He advanced to the lawn followed by Bryan, and having greeted the good curate and his companion, inquired after his fair patient.

"Better, eh?—ah, that is right! I'm glad to hear it," he said, as Fenton answered in the affirmative; "but here she is," he added, "to speak for herself!"

Gertrude now met them in her progress towards the house, as the gravel-walk she had been pursuing brought her to that point of the lawn where they were conversing. But there was one of the party that, not content with seeing her approach, ran forward to meet her with every manifestation of joy.

This was Bryan, who, though "dumb animal" he might be called, certainly proved he had a voice, in the gladsome salutation with which he barked forth his pleasure, at seeing one to whom he had been indebted for many a bone and many a meal, when his master had stopped at the Travel-

lers' Rest, to recruit himself when weary with any fishing excursion that might have taken him to the waters of Buttermere. It was now some little time since honest Bryan had been gladdened with a sight of his friend Gertrude, and the gambols and clamorous joy of the poor animal served somewhat to amuse her to whom they were addressed, and relieve her of a certain degree of the embarrassment of which she felt slightly conscious, at thus unexpectedly meeting the three gentlemen before her.

Esdaile greeted his lovely patient with his usual kindness of manner, as he took her hand and expressed his pleasure at seeing her "so much improved:" so he was willing to say, being always glad to make his patients fancy they were somewhat better than they were, since he considered this was a step towards making them better in reality.

This principle he was ready to enforce by many amusing and instructive anecdotes, professional and miscellaneous, but which our limits do not permit us to relate.

"We shall do very well," he continued to his patient; "very well indeed! only keep up your spirits, for it is a rule with me to instruct all my patients to 'laugh at cares, crosses, and contradictions,' as the best remedy for them; a better

than all that the Pharmaco 'Hope for the best' is also as itself is a 'regimen' worth a resort to 'strengthening drau

In spite of the good-hur lively little Doctor, a tear st Gertrude's eye, at some pain truded. This she endeavou brushed it away, while she the for the encouragement with her, expressing that she certain Her attention, however, was on who jumped upon her, and rof salutation; nor was she so

prove himself more worthy of her than appearances as yet have shewn;—nay, read this letter, where he describes himself as actually having obtained some post or office of 'honour.'"

And, accordingly, he placed Hatfield's letter to that effect in Esdaile's hands, who, on having read it, observed, it was singular if such were the case.

"And yet," he continued, after a pause, "I am not much surprised at the circumstance, when I call to mind, not only the talent of the man, but his extremely superior address and bearing, which are so calculated to inspire confidence that they must mainly contribute to make any application for employment successful. Certainly, I should never suspect him, from his manner and bearing, of dishonour."

"I judge a great deal," observed Golefield, by men's countenances, as to what their characters are, and——"

"Do you?" interrupted Fenton, smiling; "you follow a very fallacious guide. How many, for instance, are there, that under distress or harassment of mind, and the effect of nervous disorder, change countenance and betray confusion, not from any sense of guilt, but an apprehension that their jaded aspect may make them appear objects of suspicion."

" True," replied Esdaile, "I have witnessed in

the course of my practice many instances of this kind. In fact, the consciousness of our appearance being pleasing or ungainly in the eyes of others, often influences both manner and mind, character and disposition. The self-complacency, then, that Hatfield might have felt, from the consciousness of appearing pleasing to other people, might have given him that happy character of countenance he possesses. So, on the other hand, the consciousness of deformity, and that we are unpleasing in the eyes of others, makes us crabbed, and influences both countenance and character in a less happy way."

"Yes, yes," observed Golefield; "but the remark I made, as to judging of men's characters by their countenance, I was about to qualify, as far as regards the instance of Hatfield; for I was about to say, that I should never have imagined from his countenance—all frankness and openness as it is—that his character was sinister or deceitful. For though, indeed, it might be his object to wear a frank exterior, the better to cloak his secret design, yet in a man naturally deceitful, it would be imagined that his countenance would at times betray his character, and the bias of his disposition; but it was never so with Hatfield; which leads me to the conclusion," added the philosopher, "that he was not naturally a base or treacherous character.

but has fallen originally into some dreadful accident, to extricate himself from which, an unguarded and extraordinary attempt (a guilty one, I fear) was resorted to. But how many are entrapped into a course of life to which their natural inclinations are repugnant."

"Certainly this result is bitterly witnessed in the instance of the other sex," observed Esdaile; "where the world shuts the door of repentance and reclaim against unfortunates not naturally libertine; and I am really inclined to agree with you that Hatfield was not naturally base, but the victim originally of some bitter and compulsory necessity; though I do not mean, on any account, to say that however misfortune may have harassed and driven him to extremity, he ought not to have resisted any baleful temptation."

"Certainly he ought," said the curate, sorrowfully; "but it is, as you say, hard at all times, in the difficult situations in which men are placed, to fight against the enemy that is everlastingly on the watch for his prey—the soul! And then flesh is so frail, and circumstance so pressing—so bitter."

"The natural bias," observed Golefield, continuing his argument, "is still indicated by the physiognomy, if you scan it aright, however, much habit may have shaped the character into a course opposite to the indication it bespeaks. The natu-

rally evil propensities of Socrates were betokened in his countenance, though he had subdued them by philosophy; so Hatfield's natural propensities might have been, on the other hand, good, as his countenance would indicate, however it might have happened that misfortune, circumstance, necessity, have warped them towards crime; at least, I should wish to believe so; though still the old adage, frontinulla fides, has often much truth in it."

"Would," said the good curate, feelingly, "that the person you speak of, living as he does at this day, when we are blessed with the light of Christianity, could have resisted temptation as that exemplary heathen sage did, whom you have instanced."

"At any rate," said Dr. Esdaile, "it shews great presence of mind, and a confidence almost heroic, in this singular being, that he can walk thus as we have witnessed him, on the extreme verge as it were, where life and death meet, with so dreadful an uncertainty of fate, yet with a calm that would do honour to Socrates himself."

"Assuredly his fortitude is singular," observed Fenton. "I grieve it should not have arisen from those pure motives which religious principles inspire; they would have saved him from the fearful contingencies that have since befallen him."

So spoke the good curate, as they arrived at

the little wicket that opened from the garden of the parsonage, upon the village road. Here Esdaile proceeded to take his leave of Golefield and the curate, though the latter pressed him much to stay and dine with them. But the physician first informed them of a piece of intelligence they were almost sorry to hear, since it signified to them that he was about to leave the neighbourhood, though it imparted to them at the same time, and much to their pleasure, the advancement of their friend in his profession and practice.

In fact, the worthy Doctor had received a letter requesting his attendance in the metropolis, on a noble valetudinarian, whose case he had successfully treated some time before, and who, having experienced a relapse, was desirous of again seeking the assistance of Doctor Esdaile.

This invitation held out too many prospects of advantage to be declined; though it was with great regret that the Doctor looked forward to the contingency of being obliged to remove altogether from his present quarters, expect, perhaps, on the occasion of a visit at certain intervals. He was therefore obliged to lose no time, previously to his departure, in visiting his numerous patients in the neighbouring district, and setting them upon such a course of regimen as would be available, during his unavoidable absence from them.

Cordially, then, did Fenton and Golefield take leave of the kind-hearted and esteemed physician, who having left every necessary recommendation for the treatment of Gertrude, bade them farewell, followed now by Bryan, who by this time had sought out his master again, and forthwith trotted by the side of the vehicle that conveyed the physician from the parsonage.

CHAPTER VI.

" Falstaff. At a word; hang no more about me. I am no gibbet for you."

MERRY WIVES OF WINDSOR.

A PERIOD of some weeks had elapsed since the date of our preceding chapter, and the scene of our story now calls us to the metropolis, whither many of our "dramatis personæ" have preceded us.

It was amidst the maze of the great Babel that an elderly gentleman was proceeding along the street, muffled up in the wrappings of coat, "upper benjamin," and spenser; a dress as much in favour at the period now in view as a mackintosh, a blouze, or a cloak may be at the present day. More particularly was his neck enveloped in the huge folds of a handkerchief, or rather "bale" of green silk.

He slouched in his gait very much, poking his

head forwards, and having his arms flung listless! behind him, where his hands were clasped in each other, except when a fit of coughing, that occasionally surprised him, compelled him to raise on of them up to his chest, which he did to relieve the strain it sustained in coughing.

"Ugh—well, thank Heaven at any rate that am back again in town!" he ejaculated to himself "Hope I may get rid of this intolerable cough—here a fit seized him, forcing the tears from his eyes and the tongue out of his mouth for a minute or two; on its subsiding, he continued, as he panted for breath—"Oh Lord! oh dear!—terrible plague!—serious this, upon my word; however, I trust I may get better. I am always better in town. I was quite sick of those vile lakes and tarns, and have been rejoicing over my escape from them ever since I left them."

Just here the bell of the postman struck up behind the unfortunate gentleman, as if to check his self-gratulations on his return to town, by the clamour it rung in his ears; while that of a muffinvender raised an emulative chime just before him; yet more to swell the chorus of discord, the dustman roared and rang by turns, at the side of the pavement; and a moment after, as if to carry the climax of din to its most obstreperous pitch, a dozen newsmen's horns, trumpeting forth their challenge to the world in behalf of so many rival journals, overwhelmed our luckless peripatetic, and occasioned him soon to recant his praise of town, and his self-gratulations on his return to it.

In fact, the nuisance of the last-mentioned stentors and trumpeters was so great that it was obliged to be silenced by the interdict of Parliament. No wonder it increased the nervous irritation of the gentleman before us, who was not of the most patient temperament, and in whom the reader will have no difficulty in recognising our ascetic acquaintance, Mr. Howbiggen, who, it will be remembered, had come away from the lake country as much an invalid as he found it, with the addition of the cough, which he had continued to complain of, more especially, since the eventful day of the regatta on Derwentwater.

This cough was what is vulgarly termed, "a church-yard cough," and still obstinately harassed our valetudinarian, whose tide of vexation now flowed apace, as his impatience gave way under the accumulation of London nuisances that were so rifely assailing him.

"Oh good heavens!—what a pest!—where does a man meet with such a multiplicity—such a complication of nuisances, as in this odious—" here his voice was again drowned—"I wish I were once more out of town,—anywhere but in London." Again another peal of clamour drowned his unhappy ejaculations; and, in fact, after having scuffled, rather than walked, down two or three streets, to place himself beyond the reach of the din, he at length effected his object, so far as to be able to hear the sound of his own voice, as he now gratified his impatience in expatiating on the annoyances of "town."

"A man can't stop to look at his watch in the street, but there is sure to be a mob collected round him. First one booby stands gaping, then another oaf, then another,-a pickpocket, ten to one; and at last you form the nucleus of a knot of villany which is nothing more nor less than a machine of pocket-picking -an 'infernal machine,' that scatters about mischief on every one who comes within its sphere !- umph! - ugh !- umph ! -detestable this. I thought a moment or two ago I was better back in town; but I declare I would rather be back at those odious tarns again, than endure annoyance such as this, though the residence there was a pest on many accounts; what with that metaphysical dreamer that would mystify even a mustard-pot, rather than speak plainly of it," (here was a fling at Golefield,) " and what with that rash-brained, yet pompous noodle, Lawtonwith his hundred and one improvements-pity he did'nt improve himself. And to wind up the whole catalogue of them, there was the arch adventurer, or impostor, Hatfield—though, by-the-bye, he was the best of the set."

These words did not escape the speaker so inaudibly, it should appear, as not to be overheard by a Jewish looking person who walked about the town, with his tray-full of wares, in capacity of pencil and trinket hawker.

What interest the words which he had heard Howbiggen mutter to himself could awaken in him, we are unable to conjecture; but be this as it may, he immediately rivetted his keen eye on the dyspeptic gentleman, and seemed to recognise him, though he must himself have been utterly unknown to Howbiggen. Accordingly, our Jew hawker offered his pencils to the cynic, as he said—

"Only von shilling and shixpensh the bundle—fine article—fine article!"

"Don't want 'em," replied Howbiggen, bustling by, with a hope of passing beyond the reach of further importunity. The Israelite was still, however, pertinacious, and was by no means one of those gentry that understand taking "No" for an answer.

"Vell, then," he continued, hurrying along by the side of Howbiggen, till he fairly overtook him, and looked him in the face; "vell, then, only von shilling." "I tell you, I don't want your pencils,—I don' want 'em," repeated Howbiggen, with increased testiness of tone.

"Only shixpensh, then; all these beautiful penshilsh for only von shixpensh! Vy, itsh mon shtrough sheap!"

"If you would give me your whole tray-full with all its trash, I wouldn't give you a farthing! said Howbiggen, much irritated; and being not alarmed for his pockets, he accelerated his pac as well as he could.

The Jew, however, was inexorable; he would not quit Howbiggen's side. "If you would butry 'em," he said in a tone of supplication for which the Jews have been famous, it is said, ever since the Babylonish captivity and their acquaint ance with Nebuchadnezzar; "if you would butry 'em—"

"Would but—but I will not!" half roared and half screamed Howbiggen; his impatience being at length urged past all bounds of control. "Ge about your business, or I will send for a constable the fellow has the unbelief of the whole ten tribe of Israel! A scoundrel! pestering one in this manner!"

The Jew, seeing that he had to deal with on who was as stubborn as the most "stiff-necked even of his own race, was willing at length to rela his importunities; and after muttering, "Shush a bargain you never get again," he retired, but took care to keep his desired customer in view. In fact, he watched Howbiggen until this ill-used gentleman had reached the door of his residence; where, having scrutinized the number, the Jew took his leave. He marked the house, indeed, as carefully as ever bailiff did that of an unlucky wight amenable to arrest, while he is ready to pounce on his prey, should the outgoings of the latter lead him from the door.

Howbiggen, when seated in his arm chair, of course indemnified himself as well as he could for the various annoyances of London which he had just suffered, by venting his discontent at them unrestrainedly.

On the other hand, Miss Howbiggen, willing to cheer him, and also desirous of keeping him as well as she could in good humour, with a view to inducing him to enter into her social schemes as now about to be propounded, thus replied in a conciliatory tone.

"Well! I must say there are many annoyances in town; they are also felt more after having just returned from the quiet of the country. You will find yourself less worried with the distraction, din, and noise, after you have again become inured to them. Meantime, my dear Tobias, London has its pleasures; and I promise myself, and you too the prospect of much pleasure, from the variou little parties we shall be going to,—for see, ou friends have not forgotten us."

"Oh Lord! I wish they had!" was the amiable reply of "dear Tobias," as he looked with an aspect of verjuice at the large japan tray covered with cards of invitation, to which his party-loving sister directed his attention.

This lady continued speaking of the "friends she had mentioned, as she said—"They had no sooner heard that we had arrived in town than all these kind testimonials of remembrance, and of their pleasure, also, at the prospect of seeing us again were received. We shall have a very nice party to-morrow evening, I hope," added Miss Howbiggen, not wishing to anticipate any objection on the part of her brother to attending the party or which she had set her heart.

"' We shall have,' say you, Miss Howbiggen: You may go, if you please. As for me, I am in no condition to go out. I had hoped, now I had returned to my own house here in town, to be master of myself and my own movements. But no! it seems a man is a prey for his 'friends,' as they are called,—who pounce on his privacy, and even infirmity, and tear him to pieces, one dragging him one way, and another, another."

"Oh gracious! gracious!" said Miss Howbiggen to herself as she raised her eyes to the ceiling. "Well, then," she added to her brother, "you can stay at home if you please; and—"

"And you would go and leave me here with this bad cough, to die off as heaven might seem fit, while you were sunning yourself in the gay atmosphere of these parties—endless parties! I am much obliged to you, Miss Howbiggen."

"My dear Tobias, do not be so unreasonable—I might add, so selfish. I'm sure I have never been wanting in attention to you; but would you have us both live entirely secluded—ay, and excluded, too, from the world, and lose all our acquaintance? for such will be the case, if we do not accept an invitation or two. And then you would, on the other hand, complain of the solitude—"

"Not I!—not I!" interrupted Howbiggen, hastily; "I had rather be alone—much rather."

"Yes, I maintain you would complain of solitude," continued Hetty; "and well you might; for to be unhinged from any link of society or communication with the world, in such a place as London, in the midst of all the din, clatter, and intercourse of life, is the most melancholy solitude and state of endurance in the world!"

"Pooh, pooh! you speak from a mere love of

gadding here, and there, and everywhere," muttered Howbiggen to himself.

"Now here is our old friend Lord Balderton who really will be offended, and justly, if we do no look in at Lady Balderton's soirée. Lady Balderton's grandmother was a cousin of my grea aunt, and——"

"How many hundred times removed? ha, ha ha!" rudely replied the "dear Tobias." "This cousinship, how you stick to it, in order to keep up an acquaintance with people you fancy comme is faut. Do drop that silly old story about the cousinship; and I will compound with you for going to Lady Balderton's, if you will, further, give up half the invitations in the tray?"

"Very well, you shall have your way !"

"Here! let me look at the cards," he said, taking the tray most unceremoniously from the fair hand of Hetty, and looking at the cards one by one. "Ugh!—who's card is this?—big enough for a South-sea-bubble placard! 'Sir Giles and Lady Skinner request the honour, &c., &c.,'—umph!—Sir Giles is a rank Jacobin, and his wife a French emigrant's daughter. I don't care one fig about Sir Giles and his Lady. One meets a set of old broken-down French marquisses and counts,—why, my pedigree has more nobility in it than all of theirs put together—umph! ugh!"

So saying, he was going to fling the card into the fire, when Miss Howbiggen with laudable anxiety arrested his arm in the nefarious deed, as she exclaimed, "No, no! I like Lady Skinner very much."

"Why, you can't converse with her after all, except in a bald patchwork of French that is ridiculous."

"Well, never mind; she is a very 'good acquaintance' for all that."

"Oh, my poor sister, how very vain you are! why, gracious, you don't value people surely for any trumpery 'title' they may have? If you do, you may cringe to the merest plebeians in the worldfellows that the other day were grubbing for gold in the mud of the stock-exchange,-(a sordid grovelling crowd of usurers, bankers, and stockjobbers.) - and have raised the brow from the scrivener's desk to shrine it perhaps in a coronet. The hands that yesterday were hard and brown under the discipline of city moil, and city sordidness, are to-day raised rampant and encrimsoned in the proud and sanguined badge of baronetcy. Lord! we have the merest set of mushrooms imaginable disfiguring our circles of rank at the present day. It makes me quite sick to contemplate it."

"Dear, dear, how you talk!" exclaimed Miss

Howbiggen, after her brother had delivered himself of this testy diatribe. "I'm sure I do not desire to run after people merely because they exhibit the empty boast of 'title,' which, as you justly observed, is at present very much disparaged and tarnished, no doubt. I am not so weak or 'vain,' begging your pardon, as to do so; but surely I may be excused liking agreeable persons, although they may chance to be stars in the red book. Nay, let me add, that you—yes, you yourself—have a good deal encouraged my aristocratic notions, if, indeed, I possess any."

"Aristocratic fiddlestick! I never encouraged any such notions! I despise the greater part of mankind, patrician or plebeian."

"I beg your pardon, you are always (when any clue is given to the topic) boasting of your old family and pedigree."

"Boasting! ha, ha! you amuse me. I never boasted about the matter!—I might have stated the plain fact."

And here she was about to reply again, when her attention was suddenly called to the blaze that flashed up from the grate, being the funeral-fire of at least three dozen cards, which were flung into it by the unrelenting scorner of "evening entertainments" and "morning calls,"

"Why you have burnt the cards of five coun-

tesses, two knights of the Bath, one duke, and fifteen as excellent and respectable people—ay, and of as good family and pretensions as even you, with all your pride (though you will not avow it,) could have desired. What are you about, Mr. Howbiggen?"

"Why, there are cards upon cards in the tray yet,—enough to satisfy the most inveterate 'gadder out' in the world. I wish the people whose names figure on those cards had spared their invitations, and I might then have spared you this terrible shock of tossing a score of cards into the fire."

And he grinned a sardonic grin, as he spoke, and looked wistfully at the tray, as if he desired to toss the whole remainder of its contents into the fire. His look was like that of an old baboon's bent on mischief.

Miss Howbiggen, however, with laudable anxiety, took care to hold the tray out of his reach, as she exclaimed in an accent of concern—"You have actually burnt the cards of some of our most desirable acquaintance. Provoking! I shall forget where we are expected, and we shall offend everybody, while we lose all our acquaintance. Vexatious!"

"No, no! only half!" chuckled out Mr. Howbiggen. "You have plenty of cards, I am sure, left in the tray; and as for those I have burnt, never mind them, but console yourself for their loss in the possession of those that remain—he, he! Besides, I thought you had expressed your-self contented with looking forward to going to your 'cousin's,'—he, he, he!—Lady Balderton's."

But here a fit of coughing checked the tide of fretful raillery, and prevented any further bickering on the subject, between "dear Tobias" and his amiable sister Hetty. She, excellent and sociably disposed lady, was obliged to console herself as best she might, with the prospect of, at any rate, not being crossed or contradicted in going to Lady Balderton's soirée.

So with this hope she left the cynic coughing and grumbling in his arm-chair; nor did he forget amongst other fretful topics that employed his musings, to mutter forth his dudgeon, on the score of the Jew hawker's impertinent importunity.

"The scoundrel!" he ejaculated; "I firmly believe he must have had some design on my pocket, or, perhaps, was dogging me home with a view to robbing the house. It is not unlikely, for I verily believe I saw the fellow on the opposite side of the street as I entered, watching me, evidently with some scoundrelly design!—umph!—ugh!—pest!—plague!—nuisance!—nest of villains this London."

CHAPTER VII.

"Let the earth hide thee; Thy bones are marrowless,—thy blood is cold,— Thou hast no speculation in those eyes Which thou dost glare with."

MACBETH.

We have our misgivings no less than Mr. Howbiggen, as to the Jew who had dogged his path so pertinaciously; but as we see little prospect at present of gratifying our curiosity relative to this hawking Israelite, we must content ourselves with directing our attention to the movements of another knave, for whose "whereabout" we must now look in London. In a word, we are interested in inquiring whether Quandish, who had by this time arrived in the metropolis, had made any successful steps towards detecting, in the mazes of the great labyrinth of London, the person for whom he was so anxiously in search. That person, from his own account in the letter to Gertrude given in a preceding chapter, had represented himself as being employed in an honourable occupation; though where he was situate, or what the nature of his duties were, he did not permit to transpire. Lost, then, as we are in doub and uncertainty, not only as to his present situation but where to look for him, we cannot pursue a more probable plan of tracing him out than by following the footsteps of Quandish or Simmonds who, houndlike, kept up the chase after the prey for whose blood he thirsted.

Knowing how familiar to Hatfield all the ways and contrivances of living in London were, his enemy had arrived at no unreasonable conclusion that having failed in tracing his flight northward it was not improbable he might chance to find him lurking in the metropolis, which was a centre poin whither Hatfield had previously turned with success, when his resources elsewhere had failed.

London and Dublin, indeed, had been his mos successful, and therefore favourite, scenes of action but as he had been too recently discomfited at the Irish metropolis, Quandish felt little doubt that h was once again in his "old haunts" in the British city.

On his entrance, accordingly, into London, h was minute in describing and inquiring for th person he wanted, at all the places of public resort where it was at all likely Hatfield could have stopped on his arrival in town; his inquiries being instituted in the direction in which Hatfield would have entered it—from the Northern avenues. No satisfactory intelligence, however, could he gain.

Nevertheless, this ill success, so far from making him flag in his pursuit, rather instigated him to a vigilance and perseverance yet more unremitting. Not content with personal inquiries, he advertised the reward he had placarded about in the north. There was not a public journal in which it did not appear; but without any tidings being gleaned of its object.

As he was conning over one of these advertisements, it occurred to him that Hatfield had, as an expedient, engaged himself on former occasions of living by his wits in London as a contributor to a public journal; nay, he had been admitted as joint editor in one journal in particular, which interested itself on questions of Irish internal policy, and in illustrating which, Hatfield's acquaintance with Ireland had enabled him to be of much service.

"May he not now," pondered the ex-preacher, "have resorted to this method of supporting himself, as it affords especial opportunities for concealment?"

The moment this thought struck Quandish, a

ray of satisfaction lit up his malign and brooding countenance. It appeared to him now as if a certain clue was afforded him of arriving at some discovery of his wished-for victim. Flinging aside, then, the paper he was perusing, away he hastened to the office of the journal in question, concerning whose conduct, management, and editorship, he was now so curious to glean intelligence. To afford this, however, was no business of the clerks and minor superintendents in the office of its public delivery, and the answers he received were very short. He was informed generally that there were several editors.

Accordingly, he left the office, but took care to watch patiently, to see where the letters and communications to the different editors were conveyed; his spies following the bearers in all directions, and reporting to him the character of the place or residence where the packets were delivered.

The reason is obvious of his wishing to learn the character of the peculiar spot where any of these communications were taken; for if it should be marked by any circumstances of secrecy, or particular privacy, his suspicions would derive confirmation, and his pursuit be encouraged to proceed with increased alacrity.

His hopes of some such result as this being afforded his inquiry were not altogether disap-

pointed. He heard that in one instance a boy with communications had been followed to a very desolate habitation, where he merely put the letters through an aperture in the door, made for that purpose. To this spot he determined on directing his instant inquiries; and on repairing thither, he found no trace of any one living there. "Some one," he thought, "must come to this desolate spot to take the letters that are delivered here, however deserted it may be in itself—however little any one may stay or reside here."

The door before which he stood was that of a room near one of the "inns of court," at the top of a narrow, crazy staircase.

It was towards dark when he went, at a period when he conjectured it was most probable that a person wishing to preserve concealment, or pass under disguise, would call for letters and communications. He was not mistaken; for after waiting for some little time in a nook of the recess formed by the landing-place, he perceived an old woman come up the stairs, and after having unlocked the door, disburden a box, (something like an alms' box for the poor,) fixed to the inside of it, and which contained the papers thrust through the aperture from without.

After doing this, she appeared to have performed the extent of her commission, for she did not even enter the room or rooms (whichever might be the case) to perform any domestic duties, and which might indicate that any one led his miserable existence on this spot. Her only object, or duty, seemed to be to carry away the contents of the box.

Quandish immediately felt a strong curiosity to follow her. He thought he might even address her; and accordingly inquired "who lived on the spot, or to whom the room belonged?" She, however, said she was merely employed on "an errand" in the present instance, and could not satisfy him. So he asked her no more questions, but letting her proceed, followed her as closely as he conveniently might; not, however, without perceiving that she occasionally looked back, as if to see whether she was watched.

This circumstance immediately suggested to him that there must be some object of concealment, and that the ignorance of the woman when questioned was merely assumed; or why should she, if unconscious of any circumstances requiring secrecy, exhibit herself anxious, or, as he termed it, "fidgety," about being looked after. All these circumstances tended to confirm his suspicions that he was on "the right scent;" and so keenly in the present instance was he led on by it, that he tracked the old beldame under favour of

the gloom, till he saw her turn the corner of an obscure and murky court, black as the jaws of Orcus itself.

Down this she proceeded, and stopped at a miserable tenement, where a number of dirty Irish labourers, with women and children, were sitting on the steps in front of the door. This bevy of ragged Patlanders was occupied in drinking, and clamouring forth a strange wild Irish howl, in the genuine Milesian tongue.

He passed by these tatterdemalions without taking any notice of them, as if his business had been to call on some one in the house, and proceeded up the staircase after the old woman; though, as she had the start of him, he was unable to tell the precise room or floor where her ascent ended. He was, at present, on the landing-place of the first floor; but the doors of both rooms on the right and left of the staircase being open, he was enabled to look in and satisfy himself that the object of his search was not, to all appearance, there. He proceeded to the second floor, and fancied he heard a whispering.

He paused to listen. He then thought he detected a rustling, as if of female dresses, as the wearers of them passed backwards and forwards. At length, an apparently old man, came out from one of the rooms, whom accordingly Quandish accosted—

"Pray whom do you want?" was the reply the seeming old man, in a shrill key of voice, mo like that of an aged person of the other sex.

"I have a message for the person whose office is in —," naming the desolate spot already described where the letters were taken in.

"There is no such person here," said the o

"But I saw an elderly female bring pape here, somewhere in this house; the person, the must be here for whom I inquire,"

The commencement of an altercation seeme at this juncture to have arisen; on hearing which a person appearing to Quandish to be the ver quired. It occurred to him now that, very possibly, the old woman had only the custody of the papers, which she might still be going to take to some further place of destination; and that she had stopped by the way at what might be her own wretched abode. He entered, then, the room, with confidence at first, but started on seeing seated by one side of the fire-place a figure, bolt upright, with a huge coarse veil of black cloth flung over the face and shoulders.

Many surmises as to this singular appearance presented themselves to him; and he was about to ask, "who can that be?" or, "what is the reason of that person's countenance being veiled?" when the old woman motioned him to a chair, on the opposite side of the fire-place to that on which the veiled figure was seated. She took no further notice of his surprise, than merely to observe, "Ah! the poor man's asleep—fast asleep"—as a sufficient elucidation of his conjectures as to so singular an appearance.

Having seated himself, Quandish commenced after a moment's pause—

"You know the gentleman for whom you were carrying those papers, I dare say?"

"Oh dear, yes! I know him well! none better than myself!" she replied, with apparent unconcern.

Quandish was much pleased to see she had

little suspicion (good soul) of the object of hi questions, which he now thought he could pu undisguisedly and straightforward; which he had hardly expected would have been permitted him to do.

"You then can tell me where he lives, I dare say?

"Yes, to be sure I can!" she replied, grinning with seeming unconsciousness, while Quandisl grinned too, from a different cause.

"Can you, then?" he said; "that's right."

"You seem to wish particularly to know."

"No, no! not particularly," said Quandish, as it suggested itself to him that if he evinced much anxiety to learn the truth, he should be forced to bid high terms for the intelligence. He was not mistaken in his supposition.

"I don't see," said the old beldame, "what 'right I have to tell folks anything about the gentleman, unless I know the person that asks for him."

"No, no-true; but suppose the person that asked for him would make you some consideration for informing him?"

"Oh, why, then—" and as she spoke she felt that her hand had suddenly become heavier by a guinea.

"Now, then," said Quandish, "let us hear!" Having paid the toll, he considered that he was about to pass to the point of information. But he was disappointed.

"Do you suppose," croaked out the old woman, "that I betray a secret for such a trifle as this?" Her words were, however, anticipated by another douceur.

"Or this?" she exclaimed, with equal scorn. Another guinea, and another succeeded, but still the old crone was not willing to consider the sum equivalent to the value of the secret.

"Why, do you mean to trifle with me?" said her corrupter,

"Ha, ha! no!" screamed the old woman, in a sort of laugh. "I only wished to learn, from the amount you were willing to give, how important the secret of the person's residence must be. Why, you could not bid more if you were bidding for his life! and would you bid for the life of a fellow-creature?" she added, with an expression of scorn and disgust that astonished Quandish at the energy with which it was uttered, for a person of her age and sex.

"Oh, no," he replied, "my good woman!—you mistake—you quite mistake. I wished to find him out, as I have news of importance—of advantage—for him to know. I would give anything, consequently, to find him out."

"Perhaps you have not far to go to do that!" said the old woman, seeming now to have recovered her composure, and resuming her tone of quiet tantalization.

"I am glad to hear it !" replied Quandish.

"Perhaps you are in the same house with hin said the crone. Quandish put his finger to his lip as he said, with an air of caution—

"Ay, ay! shew me the room—where?—and he now thought she was about to surrend the desired secret; nor was he altogether mistake. To make sure, doubly sure, however, he put t remainder of the money which he had, purse at all, into her hands; and which was certainly, no a weighty argument.

"Shew you the room!" she replied, after having looked at the purse and balanced it in her han "shew you the room!"—then, after a moment pause, she added, in her former bantering tone—

"Perhaps you are in the same room with him Quandish started as his eyes involuntarily rest on the mute figure, whose face was concealed, as whose slumbers had continued undisturbed as unbroken throughout their conversation.

Whilst he was yet intently gazing on this figure and temporarily lost to what was passing arous him, in the surprise it occasioned, he felt himss seized from behind by the throat, under the graof a powerful hand, while his head was cover with a veil, much after the fashion of his mufriend opposite.

Resistance was vain,—a stronger arm than I own held him; while a cord with a ready sli

noose attached him, beyond the power of extricating himself, to the heavy old arm-chair in which he was seated.

When he was fully secured, and both his arms and legs were pinioned tight to the seat, the veil was snatched aside from his eyes, and on looking for the old hag who had tantalized him so lately, he saw—not her—but, to his wonder, beheld in her place the very being he was in quest of—Hatfield himself!

"Ah, ha! my worthy friend, Mr. Simmonds; so you have found me, have you?" said our hero, in a tone and with a smile of polite irony, and in his usual "easy" way. For a few moments he stood, with this smile on his countenance, regarding the ghastly and astonished features of his trepanned foe, till at length the expression of contempt and irony that marked his smile strengthened into a keener feature of scorn, as he thus proceeded—

"Ingrate! is it possible you are the being to whom I have been a benefactor? But I will not dwell on that. So you have hunted me out at last!—but remember, you have a Hatfield to deal with. And though, fiend as I must consider you, you have keenly followed on the scent of my blood, yet I have distanced you hitherto. What hinders me this moment from ridding myself of your rife and unrelenting blood-thirsti-

ness-this instant?" And he raised the pisto he had drawn forth as he spoke, with a menad that left the wretched being he addressed litt hope for his life. "But no!" he continued; " will not defile my hands with the blood of so bas a miscreant. Were I to take the life of a mar though he were my bitterest enemy, I should con mit an offence in the eye of Heaven unpardonablean offence of a nature I have ever shuddered at the thought of. Yes! Heaven is merciful and relen ing; but man is the persecutor that hunts to death The crime you hunt me down for is pardonab in the sight of supreme Wisdom, but not in th eve of bloodthirsty, wolfish man.* Take you life, then, miscreant; but thank not me for the gift thank the mercy of that Heaven that overcome me and holds me back,-that whispers to m anguished spirit to trust in it for future deliver ance, as I have trusted in it hitherto and foun rescue. I will not shew myself insensible, ungrate ful, for the extension of mercy !- I will not forfe the protection of Heaven by spilling blood although the worthless blood of such a reptile,viper indeed whose blood were better spilled tha spared to rid the earth of his loathsome doings; bu

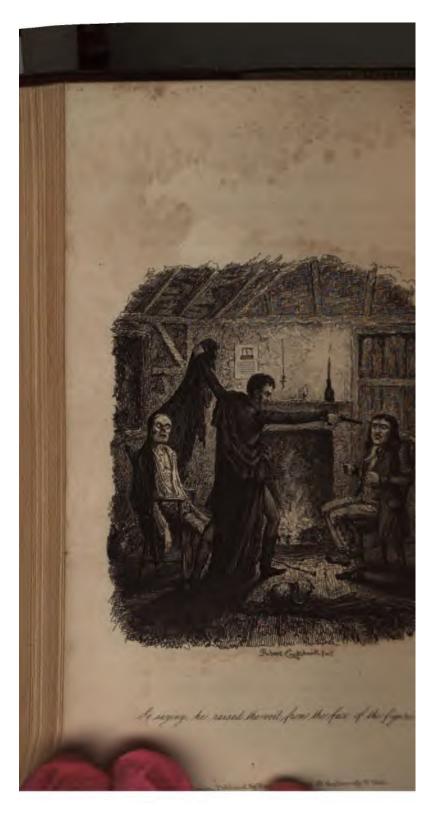
The legislature subsequently annulled this declaration, be not till very lately, and after a course of persevering effort t attain the desired result.

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not to be spilled by my hand. Ay, you may curse," he continued, as Quandish in all the venom of impotent rage uttered curses from between his teeth, as he ground them together.

"Ay, you may curse,—you will have leisure to do so. You have sought me, and you have found me; but not to triumph in your search much, I think!" he added, in a tone again of bitter irony. "The mean acts of buying my life, which you were practising where you believed they were available, are turned against yourself. The poor weak old woman you fancied you were bribing to deliver me up was—myself! And most seasonably has this sum come into my hands; it will enable me to institute another step towards baffling your bloodthirsty pursuit.

"There are twenty and odd guineas here, it seems. Ah! well, you can afford to pay that, since you will be richly repaid the amount, in the balance above it of the Reward Money—when you get it—when you secure me!" and he laughed bitterly, in mingled scorn and indignation. "At present, I leave you where you are, but not without a companion!"

So saying, he raised the veil from the face of the figure that was seated in the chair opposite Quandish, while he hastened from the room which Quandish heard locked and bolted after him. To what a companion was the wretched inform left! That unveiled brow disclosed the livid a pect of death! It was the death bewailed in the Irish "keen" he had heard on entering the house

In the squalid habitation in which the deceas had met his end, life had found little comfo little of repose; and a bed was even wanting thim to breathe his last on. The chair in which died, his cold, stiff figure still occupied. The was "no speculation" in those eyes; no friend hand had closed the lids to veil them decent There they glared in fixed and horrid lifelessnefull in the face of the scared being who was constrained to meet them. It was in vain he strought to shun their chill encounter—there they glared-fixed immoveably on him—still chill—still dead—still the same!

With intense gazing, the wretched man's brain no less than sight, became dizzy. A faint sicknet overspread his whole frame. By degrees, the horr Mesmerism* to which he was subjected had effect on his senses. Disordered fancies crowd on his brain—the phantom figure seemed to rain itself and approach him—he fancied he felt its co hands touch him—he struggled to rescue hims

^{* &}quot;Animal Magnetism," of which Mesmer was the origin

from the clammy touch, but in vain,—the horrid night-mare of a deranged fancy was on him,—he could not escape. Before him the dead form rose and met him face to face, while the icy touch thrilled through his frame—he shrieked aloud—in his delirium he called on the name of Hatfield to assist him, unconscious that he was appealing for aid to the being he had a brief period past sought to destroy; but Hatfield had aided him in times past, and the impression possibly haunted him, though he had since done his utmost to efface it.

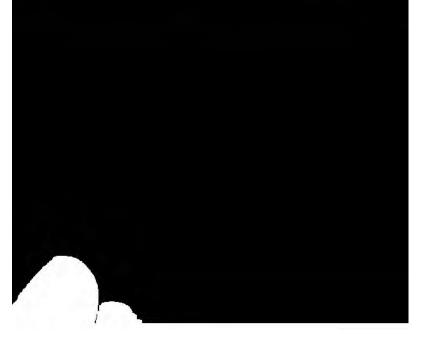
A stupor came on him, and a shout of laughter, as if of fiends, rose over his dream of horror. The bonds that constrained him could not have held him more strictly bound than the ice-bonds of terror that mastered him—all insensible and apparently lifeless as he was.

The eyes, they were starting from the sockets, in the convulsive struggle his frame had sustained—the limbs were listless—the hands dropped. The livid hues on the cheek seemed caught, as it were, in ghastly contagion from the brow of death opposite, that still glared fixedly on him, as though watching in silent, relentless scrutiny, its deadly spell upon his form!

CHAPTER VIII.

- "King. Do you think 'tis this? Queen. It may be very likely."
- "King. His affections do not that way tend, Nor what he spake. . . . And I do doubt the hatch, and the disclose, Will be some danger."

SHAKSPEARE.



Lady Balderton being connected in the degree of "hundredth cousin," as Mr. Howbiggen would sneeringly observe, with himself and sister, the social intercourse between Miss Howbiggen and her "noble cousin" had been kept up beyond the limits of the single soirée already mentioned. In fact, Miss Howbiggen was (to use the uncouth language of our grandfathers) "mighty friends" with her ladyship; which is not always the case amongst "relations." The divisions, indeed, and jealous feuds amongst kindred, are, it is melancholy to think, often much more mean and rancorous than between the most utter strangers that are inimical to each other. But such was, happily, not the footing on which Miss Howbiggen and her kinswoman stood; and not only had our amiable spinster been present at the grander banquets at Balderton house, but-yet more inviting exhibition of kindred confidence and esteem on the part of her noble cousin-she had enhanced by her presence the charms of that select group, the "family party," which Lady Balderton occasionally summoned around her, in the brief intervals of more extended pomp and luxurious riot.

Lord Balderton, being but an Irish viscount and no peer, was obliged to seek public distinction in the "lower house;" and his official duties requiring hisattendance in his "place" almost every evening of the week,—except the dearly met, and fondly looked-for Wednesday,—his hearth and home were often left as desolate as that of any club-lounger of the present day, who becomes a "male-gossip,' rather than a "family-man," by dawdling for ever at his club, away from home," as his neglected spouse will tell you. On these occasions of being left to herself, Lady Balderton would often seek the agrémens of Miss Howbiggen's society, when cards and tea en petite comité relieved the evening of ennui.

But a word more on that eminent personage Lord Balderton. The "place" we cursorily stated him as holding was no less than the important post of secretary for Ireland; but how far he was fitted for that station or not was a subject of much cavil amongst some, while others were so unceremonious and uncomplimentary as to declare he had no capacity for it at all. It is true he had an overwhelming and portentous command of words; and decked out trifles in a pomp of grandiloguence worthy a Titan when uttering invectives against the heavenly dwellers of Olympus. But if from the midst of all these sounding sentences and pomp of diction, you were to search for any pith or point, you would look for it as hopelessly as for Gratiano's reasons, which, enveloped as they were in follies and trifling, were as one or two poor grains of wheat to a bushel of chaff; and even when found, they scarcely repaid the search.

However, be this as it might, Lord Balderton's Brobdignagian periods, and "sesquipedalia verba," his shallow arguments spun out "per ambages verborum," which, being interpreted, means "rigmarole"-all these, too, being rendered yet more portentous by a "most admirable" confusion of metaphor, and parentheses longer than the sentence they interlarded-had, yet, their use. For despite all the singular characteristics of his lordship's eloquence, it often stood the government leader in the house in good stead; for if time was to be gained by the mere ventilation of inane verbiage until the "leader" was ready with some momentous motion,-or again, if the attention of the house was to be diverted from more important matter, its senses puzzled and led away from the merits of the question-the noble lord was found a most useful servant. He would "talk" on anything and everything, and without end, as far as dealing in "generals;" but as for the "point"-he was never accused of such a feat as coming to one.

The noble lord, though of hasty temper (it was said) himself, yet kept others in amazing good humour; and there was a "set" in the house that used uniformly to come down to it with the view of having a "treat," as they termed it, in hearing Lord Balderton's "good things." There they would sit—the ribald crew—with a ready grin lurking at the corner of their lips, the moment he was "on his legs"—a grin, which the sun of his lordship's genius was soon to ripen into the full-blown glory of loud cachinnation. How could it be otherwise? For even his best friends could scarcely sit near him, and look grave, when the splendid jumble of metaphors flung forth by his lordship, "astonished their weak minds;" when measures were represented as "hingeing on a feature," and when the "incendiary spirit" was said to "inundate and deluge the country!"

But the great problem with all persons, whether of his own or the opposite party, was, whence was derived what sense ever did transpire through his harangues? It was difficult to imagine that himself was the source of it, and there were many surmises on the subject. Some said that his friend the Prime Minister supplied the grain of wit to the bushel of rigmaroles or "gab," as it was indiscriminately designated. Others told stories of his being hours on hours closeted with a very shrewd and clever private secretary; and it was generally believed that it was from this source the qualifying ingredient of common sense and argumentative "pith" was acquired.

This valuable Achates of Lord Balderton was so much occupied with his duties of secretary, with answering letters, transcribing documents. and drilling, or (what is called at college) "cramming" the noble lord, that he found little time for society, and was often as much an "absentee" from Lady Balderton's soirées as his lordship himself. Seldom, however, as his multifarious duties - and chiefly that of "drumming" sense into his patron's numskull-would permit him to engage in the relaxations of society, yet he had not been so much a recluse but that Miss Howbiggen had met him once or twice; and though he had a certain obliquity in one of his eyes, and was absolutely without whiskers, (peculiarities which she recognised in none of her acquaintance,) yet there was "a something," she fancied, in his face and countenance, that struck her as not having been seen by her for the first time.

This surmise she of course expressed to her brother.

"Pooh, nonsense!" he replied, hastily, and with his usual scepticism. "You women are always finding out resemblances, and fancying you know this person, and that person, and the other, just for the sake of gratifying an inclination to prate about people!"

" My dear Tobias, may not a person express an

idea that she has seen another before, without suggesting it as a hinge for idle speculation? Now I think of it, he is uncommonly like a person I have seen before! Who can it be?" she said, as she sate puzzling herself with her efforts at recollection.

"I'm sure I can't tell!" uttered the "goodhumoured" Tobias, "nor does it very much signify!"

"Oh! I know who it is he is like!"

"Well, who, pray?"

"Why, no less a person than our former guest that person that passed himself off as Colonel Renmore."

"Pshaw! nonsense! absurd!—how could he ever become Lord Balderton's secretary? My good Hetty, do let me advise you not to give way to this foolish habit (excuse me) of rummaging out 'who people are!' Just let them alone, and their likenesses! It was all through your importunity that we first admitted, or rather worried, that certainly clever and agreeable, but designing person into our house; and now, it seems, you will not rest contented until you commit a positive affront in tattling to Lady Balderton your surmises that her husband's confidential secretary and this adventurer, this soi-disant 'Colonel,' may be the same person."

"No, no; no such thing, Mr. Howbiggen. There you step beyond the point in question. I only say they are like each other."

"Well, what matters that? You may see fifty people like him, or like one another. The expression of a conjecture such as that you are longing to deliver yourself of can be of no avail, unless it were addressed to the detection of a proscribed individual. If it has not this object in view, it is mere idle 'gossip,' and had better be suppressed. I assure you, it will be highly affronting to Lord Balderton's secretary, Mr. . . . what is his name?"

"Cappergill," replied the lady.

"Mr. Cappergill,—if you go spreading about that he is like a notorious adventurer, nay a denounced criminal!"

So saying, Mr. Howbiggen hobbled out of his arm-chair to take up a review, which had about that time come forth on its wings of "blue and saffron," like a mighty dragon fly or hornet, buzzing about and stinging all that came in its way; its waspish characteristics recommending it congenially to our ascetic.

Miss Howbiggen feeling conscious that her brother had the best of the argument, was not sorry to let the topic drop for the present, and as far as he was concerned. An old comic poet says— "You shall never convince me, however convincing;" and of this proposition Miss Howbiggen's "amiable failing" appears to offer an illustration; for it was not her disposition to be convinced by argument, however reasonable, or silenced by contradiction, however decisive. On the contrary, the more she thought of this "singular resemblance," the more fidgety she became each succeeding day, to find some channel for the communication of her ideas, and yet more some confirmation of their validity.

Such a channel was not long wanting, and into the bosom of the person who afforded it, she poured forth her "surmise," with an anxiety that was not surpassed in the instance of even Midas's wife, in disburdening herself of the secret, that told such a pretty tale at her husband's expense.

If, then, Miss Howbiggen was delighted on her part in making the communication, the satisfaction she afforded to the person she addressed was reciprocal. This being was no other than Quandish, whom we left in so disagreeable a predicament some time ago, according to the period that has elapsed in our story, and the circumstances of whose extrication from this dilemma we shall afford in due time.

At present, we shall proceed to say, that he grinned a ghastly smile on hearing Miss Howbiggen's "surmise"—a smile indicative of bitter malice and a resolution for revenge. He caught at the "hint," (as it appeared to him to be,) that Mr. Cappergill was the person he so panted to find—he caught at it, as a drowning man would at a straw; for he had begun almost to despair of succeeding in his pursuit of his prey, since his last unexpected, and for him disastrous "falling in" with the desired object of his quest,

Since that period, he had been yet more ardent, if possible, than ever, in his endeavours to discover and secure the person against whom his rancour had been so much exasperated; but all trace of him was lost. Various were the disguises Quandish adopted in order to facilitate his search; now wandering about as a jew pedlar—now as a newsmonger;—in fact, traversing the town in all directions and capacities.

His meeting with Miss Howbiggen had been entirely owing to his own vigilance. We remember the circumstance of Mr. Howbiggen being so plagued with the importunity of the Jew pencilvender. This worthy was no other than Quandish, and his annoyance of Mr. Howbiggen was a short period subsequent to the discomfiture he had met from Hatfield, as lately witnessed. He had been active in tracing out any of the gentry that happened to be in town whom Hatfield had known,

as he thought it possible his necessities might lead him to practise some expedient on them, in order to raise money, and hence he hoped a clue would be afforded towards arriving at the man himself.

Accordingly, when he had discovered the house of old Howbiggen, which he did by following him pertinaciously as we have before described, he made it his business to lurk about the premises, in order to catch an opportunity of addressing Miss Howbiggen as she should be stepping into the carriage. He well knew her propensity for what her brother termed "gossiping," and was certain that if any intelligence such as he desired was to be arrived at, he should gain it through her, if she had it to afford him. He was not disappointed, as has been seen, in falling in with her.

He made her a most lowly and respectful reverence as he pretended to be casually passing by, his appearance being that of the dissenting preacher again, under which character he had been known to her at Buttermere. His gear accordingly corresponded to this sanctimonious character, and commanded her respect by the sobriety of its guise. It consisted of a pepper-and-salt square-tailed coat, with large silvered buttons, a pair of drab small-clothes, and gaiters of the same complexion; the "lower man" being terminated by the huge square-toed shoes that marked the splay-

foot of the wearer, the instep being further surmounted by an enormous buckle, which some of our worthy village "gaffers" may still, even at this late day, be seen to exhibit.

Miss Howbiggen was by no means backward or uncondescending in acknowledging the apparent preacher's salutation. She had now found, it occurred to her, some one to whom to impart the "surmise" that so haunted her. Nay! the appearance of Quandish was a signal to recur to those recollections of Buttermere, and, in connexion with that spot, of Hatfield also, that offered so excellent an avenue for the introduction of this "surmise." The tale was then at her tongue's end, concerning the "resemblance" to our hero which she had discovered in Mr. Cappergill.

She lost no time, it may be supposed, in hastening to arrive at the expression of all she wished to relieve herself of—concluding, "And such a resemblance to him, in spite of his squint and red hair! Oh! Mr. Quandish, you would agree with me, as regards the likeness, were you to see him. And surely there is no harm in saying one person is like another, in spite of all Mr. Howbiggen says! But he," she added, to herself, "speaks just for the sake of contradiction, and for no other reason in the world."

We have already stated the satisfaction with which this intelligence was received by Quandish, and I immediately set about taxing his wits to devise the best means of putting the inquisitive lady in the way of arriving at a still further assurance of the validity of her surmise, relative to the identity of the secretary and his enemy; his determination being to act upon the intelligence he hoped to extract from her, and shape his plans accordingly.

Meantime, he related to her, in obedience to he inquiry, the whole circumstances of his pursu from Derwentwater of the "culprit," as he designated Hatfield, carrying them down to the last disastrous rencontre with him, which ended in him self being left vis-à-vis with the dead figure, as above described. The murky court which had been the scene of this grim catastrophe appears, from the information he now gave the wondering Mis Howbiggen, to have been situate in that district of Irish colonization whose tutelar saint is "S Giles."

"Good heavens, how shocking!" she exclaimed "And how, pray, were you extricated at last from such a frightful predicament?"

"When I next came to myself, I found a number of Irish people round me, who were loading me with abuse, so far from giving me any comfor

They asked how I dared to intrude into the house of death and mourning, where they were already 'keening?' This objurgation was but an excuse, as I suppose, for maltreating me, in the course of which they despoiled me of everything I possessed. However, I was glad to submit to the alternative of usage bad even as this, rather than remain in my present horrible condition, and eventually they turned me out with scarcely anything to cover me."

- "But have you not taken steps to punish these villains?"
- "So bewildered was I, and so ill had I recovered my wits from the effects of the shock I had sustained, (and I will own it makes me feel a dizziness even to recount it,) that I could not tell who my assailants were, so as to bring them to justice."
- "In fact, they robbed you of everything, good Mr. Quandish?"
- "Ay, verily did they! and it is a mercy they did not murder me; but the Lord be praised, their hands were stayed from the worse offence."
- "But how came the dead body there? and what had they to do with it?"
- "I suppose the dead person had been some relative of the party, for the term 'keening' expresses a lament for the dead. Be this as it may, they wreaked their fury on me as an intruder, as I have related to you."

"But how came Hatfield back to those desolate rooms w taken from the newspaper offi

"As to his presence in that court, I conclude that it was a the papers used eventually to being in the first instance is rooms' you speak of, and whe woman, whose apparel he hunder when he discomfited a light was so uncertain and in no doubt it was the same of lowed to the court; but she the staircase under the guis

"They were so. Ah, happy was I when I at length was fairly out of their reach, although I had been turned out of their horrid den with scarcely a rag left on me! Happy was I in escaping with my life." He sanctimoniously added in his character of preacher—"Heaven be praised!"

"But you have not told me yet whether you searched for Hatfield at the rooms where the papers were first of all left for him?"

"Of course, I went there with the police, but no clue or trace could be discovered of him. The doors were left open, and a placard placed outside the entrance, saying that Mr. Squires (such appears to have been the name he had adopted in this newspaper adventure) had left England. So here we are at fault again, and though the apprehension of this dangerous adventurer is a public duty, yet Heaven forbid!" exclaimed Quandish, acting now his old part, (and in which alone Miss Howbiggen knew him,) of sanctimoniousness, "Heaven forbid I should seek the life of any man !- and it would be much against my will," continued the hypocrite, "and my own individual feelings, that I should give this man up to justice, even if I could apprehend him. Still we have duties to society to perform - duties to our better fellow-subjects! But as to the person you mention as so like Hatfield, I should hardly think there could be any chance or probability of their identity?"

He spoke with an air of pretended indiffer knowing that he should only, by the doubt he pressed, be irritating Miss Howbiggen's curios ascertain, if she could, how far her "doub "surmise" possessed validity or not. She regular that the subject is one of no inconside curiosity, and really I wish I knew the best most delicate means of arriving at some satisfat of my doubt."

"Why," replied the wily man, "the pla and most obvious, as well as most delicate would be, by relating to him in the course of versation my story of the Irish garret, and the dicament in which I was placed."

" And see how it affects him, you would a eagerly interposed Miss Howbiggen, delighte the happy suggestion.

"Why, yes," replied Quandish, with trea rous calmness; "and should you," he added, at any loss to conclude whether this Mr. Cap gill exhibits any consciousness of the circumsta or not, perhaps you would favour me," he tinued in a wily tone, "by informing me of manner, and the observations he makes on the cumstances; and as far as my poor wit can ju I shall be happy to tell you whether your presurmise has been reasonably entertained or not

So saying, the wily Quandish, having sugge everything he secretly desired should be pu practice, withdrew with a profound reverence, letting Miss Howbiggen know that, by her leave, he would certainly wait on her to learn anything she might be pleased to communicate, relative to the circumstances on which they had just been talking, merely, he repeated, to see how far her surmise had been reasonably entertained, and for no other reason in the world!

This qualifying clause had been added by the hypocrite out of apprehension, lest Miss Howbiggen's alarm might have been awakened by the consideration, that possibly the life of a fellow-creature might be eventually hazarded, by this wanton gratification of her restless curiosity. In fact, the thought did suggest itself to her mind, after "the tempter" had taken his leave; and for awhile she hesitated whether she should relate a word to Mr. Cappergill about the matter; but the restlessness of curiosity battled too strongly to be subdued, and her alarm was quieted by the thought—

"Oh, pooh!—impossible!—Lord Balderton's secretary can be no other than he seems to be. Besides, this good man Quandish would never wish to proceed to ulterior steps, if I begged him not,—even should Mr. Cappergill betray any consciousness of the circumstances of the story."

Thus quieting any apprehensive qualms that rose in her mind, and too willing to flatter the promptings of her untiring spirit of inquisitive Miss Howbiggen addressed herself with all intended to going to Lady Balderton's. An optunity of setting her heart at rest was afforded very next evening, on the occasion of a sewhich Miss Howbiggen graced with her present

If this estimable lady had been anxious hith as regards the secret object of her visit, in wh tumult of fidget did her pulse now throb, during interval previously to Mr. Cappergill's making appearance!

At length he came, but afforded her for a time no opportunity of addressing him. Some or another she fancied that he always endeavou to avoid her. This evening, in particular, seemed engaged in conversing with others.

At last, her impatience would hold out no long. She advanced towards him. He did not perceive insidious "march" she was stealing on he being engaged in "drilling," as usual, Lord Ederton, and apparently using no small pains force a comprehension of some proposition, through the husk of his noble patron's obtuseness.

A consideration such as this did not for a mom weigh with Miss Howbiggen, so she accosted secretary abruptly, while Lord Balderton hav received as much instruction as he could well s port, was not sorry to have the stretch of attent he had been exerting, relaxed by Miss Howbiggen's interruption. He accordingly moved away, leaving the coast clear for the anxious spinster to address Cappergill.

"Oh! Mr. Cappergill, I'm so glad to have been afforded an opportunity of speaking to you!—but you really are so much in request, that I had quite despaired of the pleasure."

Cappergill bowed and made no answer, though he muttered something to himself not peculiarly expressive of satisfaction at her interruption of his conversation with Lord Balderton. She took notice that his "squint" was remarkable on the present occasion, and therefore, together with his red hair, was convinced he was by no means the person she had once or twice suggested him to be. She therefore spoke with greater readiness and confidence, being more and more relieved of any qualms of hesitation.

"I had something so droll to tell you," she said, "in illustration of the conversation the other evening, about the singular events one hears of every day in life." This appeared a plausible excuse for introducing the subject she had in view. "So droll—so singular!" she added.

"Indeed!" answered Cappergill, with pretended interest. "Ay, it is a droll world we live in! And whether the romance of it is more strange, or the realities more bitter, is a difficult question to cide!"

"You would say so, were I to tell you a stor heard the other day." And then she suddenly claimed—"Dear me, how like you are a gentlen I once knew!"

"Umph!" was the laconic reply, or rather knowledgment of Miss Howbiggen's apostrophe

"You are, indeed!" only there are circumstant it is unpleasant to mention about the gentlem you bear a resemblance to," she added, with delicacy and consideration truly praiseworthy; at then she wound up this exhibition of "delicacy" saying—"I refer to—to—a very singular characknown to me some little time ago by the name Colonel Renmore."

"Oh! Colonel Renmore," replied Capperg smiling; "let me see—who was he?" exhibit perfect unconcern as he spoke; and apparer answering more out of courtesy than as if he w interested in Miss Howbiggen's observations.

"Dear me! don't you know?—have you ne heard of him? Why, he was the person t married the famous 'Beauty of Buttermere,'; is supposed, now, to be playing some part, here London, best known to himself; unless he has g abroad."

At the name of the Beauty of Buttermer

momentary paleness might have been traced over the cheek of Cappergill; but it was in great measure concealed by a certain judicious use of rouge on the part of that person; for rouge had not, at the period in view, been abandoned, but was still a very general adjunct of the toilette of both sexes. It had strong advocates in most of the members of the "old school," who, in adhering to its use, declared they supported the doctrine, "that it was a duty to society to make yourself appear to the best advantage, and disguise defects as much as possiblewhether the pallor of dissipation and sickness, or the wrinkles of age !" Perhaps vanity would have whispered a more true reason for its use, and suggested that it was but a bootless effort at exhibiting the appearance of youth when youth was flown.

But to return to Cappergill. The rouge he had applied so judiciously, harmonized so well with the tints of the red hair he wore, that no one imagined it was any other than his natural complexion and colour.

To the mention of the Beauty of Buttermere and her marriage, he replied, hastily—

"Oh, yes; I remember now all about it. I heard the circumstances, though I was abroad at the time."

"To be sure!" replied Miss Howbiggen; "I

thought you would remember the story! We but this is not all; I have another tale, no less si gular, concerning the person who married he that was told me."

"By whom?" asked Cappergill, with an abrup ness and apparent interest that surprised M Howbiggen, being so opposed to his indifference manner hitherto.

"By the very man," she replied, "who was actor in the scene I shall relate to you!"

" And what was his name?"

" Quandish."

At the mention of this name it did not escap Miss Howbiggen that Cappergill appeared shrink, as it were, within himself, judging as sl did from the look of surprise he suddenly exh bited, though it was subdued instantaneously, has an expression of reserve, which was further softened down into his former calm composure and almoindifference. This circumstance she treasured us in her mind; meantime, she proceeded, after repeating the name, and asking Cappergill sifth had ever heard it before?"

"Oh dear, no!-never! But pray let me her the story."

Accordingly, she related the whole scene of the death-chamber in which Quandish had figure with so little satisfaction to himself. She looke hard, as she spoke, in Cappergill's face, to try and discern if the narrative produced any effect on his countenance; but no such thing was perceptible, except that he appeared to listen with the due interest which the story demanded; and expressed a mingled sense of horror, and amusement too, at the features of awe no less than awkwardness combined, that invested the circumstance of Quandish's situation, when tied down in the chair, facing the dead figure.

"It is a good story," he observed, "and would make a famous scene on the stage! I should not be surprised if the whole history of Hatfield and the Beauty,' and this man Quandish, of whom you speak, were 'hashed up' into a melodrame!"

So saying, he turned aside, with an air of indifference, to speak to some one who most opportunely came up at this moment to converse with him. Miss Howbiggen, on her part, as she now repaired to the seat she had left, thought to herself—

"Well! if this person is the same that both Mr. Quandish and myself surmised it might be, I am most marvellously mistaken. It is true there is a cast in the countenance that still strikes me as singularly resembling the person I knew as Colonel Renmore; but I am quite satisfied now, that he never could have shewn such indifference, except in one very trifling instance, had he been the

person in question. Well!" she added, "at rate, there is no harm done; and my doubt set at rest!"

This important result she was now all anxietimpart to her brother, on her return home; the how little he cared about the matter we scarcely suggest. To maintain silence on it the next morning, when she should see Quan was impossible. Accordingly, she hied I again, with as much "fidget," though from o site causes, as that with which she had set out

It is not our intention, however, for the saidepicting Mr. Howbiggen's impatience at her what she had to relate, to protract the progret our story by repeating what the reader kr. The impatience of the testy old gentleman well be imagined; and we shall only observe on the present occasion it was exasperated more than usual pitch; for it so happened the was just about to retire to bed, more and a peevish than ever from the effects of indisposit (the complaint on his chest having increased,) whiss Howbiggen returned to disquiet him.

She entered the drawing-room just as he retiring from it, with the little night-lamp he use his hand, and actually kept him standing, "in to go," until she had compelled him "to hear out." Of course the time was in no little de

protracted by his interpolations of grumbling, and her objections to them.

A less impatient ear was afforded her the next morning by Quandish, who "humbly waited on her" according to the appointment she had sanctioned. This wily person drew very different conclusions to those of Miss Howbiggen, from the unconcern and indifference manifested by Mr. Cappergill according to her representation. Pretending to concur with her, however, as to the banishing all further "surmise" on the matter, he withdrew, his heart swayed between hope and fear as to the result of the measures he now instantly pursued, though he did not tell his plans to the unsuspecting Miss Howbiggen. These measures were the procuring a warrant to arrest "James Hatfield on charge of felony," in Lord Balderton's house.

But lo and behold! when the officers of justice, together with Quandish, arrived at the house, they found the whole family in dismay at the sudden departure and disappearance of Mr. Cappergill.

"Mr. Cappergill call you him?" cried out Quandish and his brother myrmidons. "He was no other than the 'notorious Hatfield!"

"Hatfield! Hatfield in my house!" exclaimed the astonished Lord Balderton. "Impossible! I knew Mr. Cappergill in Ireland, and had the good fortune to meet him again in London after a considerable period of severance—three or four year. On my mentioning the circumstance of my private secretaryship being vacant, he was good enough accept it; and I, on my part, esteemed mys happy in having found so valuable and able assistant. Impossible, gentlemen; you must must take!"

"Why, then, has he so suddenly disappearedthis Mr. Cappergill?" asked the first office
"Why, my lord, he would take in the whole pricouncil, much more one single head in it! I ha
no doubt he has before successfully imposed of
your lordship under the name of Cappergill—or
of a hundred names he has at different time
adopted. He was 'good enough' was he," co
tinued the man, chuckling, and addressing a "know
ing look" to his comrades, "to accept the offi
of your lordship's secretary?—he, he, he! I da
say he was!"

"The most fortunate rogue I ever knew!" of served another of the myrmidons.

"It shall not avail him, though," observed Quandish, restlessly, and not at all entering into the spin of the officers' ribaldry; "he cannot yet have escape far, and if I might venture to suggest, will all probability be quitting London, now that the chase is set on foot for him here. If so, it is to

chances to one he will run northward again; for to Dublin, his favourite old haunt, he scarcely dares venture, being too well known. And I know his plan of 'doubling' like a hare upon his old track."

"Well, then, northward shall we set out on the chase after him?" asked one of the officers, as he added, "Some of us can stay and search for him here, if possibly he may still be lurking in town; and the others can set out of town after him;—and since we know no surer direction in which to trace him, let it be northward, for it is more likely he will go where his wife is than anywhere else."

"No doubt; and get her to go abroad with him, eh?" added the other officer.

"Come along, then," said Quandish, "since we can resolve on no surer plan of pursuit. Every moment we delay is so much 'starting distance' given the culprit, and will be a cause of future increased trouble to ourselves."

So saying they took leave hurriedly of his lordship, who stood transfixed in amazement at the whole parley that he had heard, and with difficulty recovered from the surprise it had occasioned him.

"Well!" at length he exclaimed with his peculiar emphasis of style, "rigmarole," and characteristic felicity of metaphor, "I never, in all the dark annals of mystification that have bewildered and dazzled human perception, either heard, rea or experienced anything to equal in 'vivid obset the present astounding 'cataclûsmus' I may ca or overwhelming of the mind! Cappergill out to be Hatfield! Preposterous, and u countable! Where shall I find (be he who may) such another secretary? such an alter eg to dictating all that could promote my intere Why, he was the very mainspring on which all features of my brightest designs were rooted. W is to be done?—loss irreparable, positively!"

With this despairing conclusion, yet no splendidly characteristic harangue, Lord Balder retired to his study, to concoct, as best he mis

CHAPTER IX.

"Upon the mountain's dizzy brink she stood,
Over her look the shadow of a mood
Which only clothes the heart in solitude,
A thought of voiceless depth. The wind had blown
Her hair apart, through which her eyes and forehead shone.
She would have clasped me to her glowing frame,
Those warm and odorous lips might soon have shed
On mine the fragrance and the invisible flame,
Which now the cold winds stole."

SHELLEY.

STERN winter now raised his icy sceptre over hill, and vale, and melancholy meer; the wide panorama of that mountain region which we have erewhile viewed, decked in the chequered beauty of lichen and heath-flower, and all golden-glowing beneath the sun of summer, are languid, dark, and forbidding. We face again those mountain heights, (from which for a while we have been called,) to mark their frown, unredeemed, as when last we viewed them, by the smile of azure heavens and a season of joy.

Far and wide, snow-capped peak and crag, Skiddaw southward to the Langdale heights Helvellyn, formed now one sublime as drear perfor Winter to hold his court in. Chiefest to peers of his vast and sullen Council, the Pik Scawfell, reared their ice-tiared crests, glean chilly and afar through the frore void. Hark! It is celebration of him in those December blasts yell, as though demon orgies, through Wasted dreary "den!"

The gaunt Stranger-phantom of the Bro might pour a laugh of unearthly joy at ing himself at home amid these stern Br wildernesses, as congenial to him as his native I solitudes. All sear and scattered, the leaves, to in gloomy disport by the eddying winds, dans weird mazes along Seathwaite side. The of Desolation that haunts the void, finds weld terror, too, in that sable vapour-shroud when wraps him brooding over Shoulthwaite Mos the dun-banks of moaning Ennerdale. No of joy or life, no jocund carol of birds taking over the yellow heath-blossom, no peaceful lo of kine, (happy sounds!) which have eres greeted us as we shared the lovely mour maiden's track, are now to be heard over vale hill.

In seeking, then, once again her trace, shall

look for her, as wont, over her jocund and wild mountain track, accompanied by her herd?—shall we look for her under her maternal roof, at the once peaceful little hostelrie where we have so often sojourned, and which has erewhile won cheerfulness from her smile—ay, more even than from that of the lovely haunts amidst which it was embosomed?

A leaden looking and stagnate waste spread now the waters of the mere, which in happier hours, and under a fairer season, gleamed before us one azure sparkling expanse, or crimsoned beneath suns of splendour. Changed indeed is the scene no less than the feelings of HER with whom anon we must gaze on it. The only voice that breaks on the vast stillness and solitude of all that mountain district, is the hoarse murmur of some waterfall from the steep, whether it awaken the dreary cavern echoes to respond to the call of Lodore or of Scale Force.

The elm is bare whose venerable arms stretch them in front of yonder dwelling. You will scarcely know those walls again, where the rich verdant mantle of their parasite creepers is stripped away by the hand of winter, and the naked tendrils of the plants are but the skeleton of their former luxuriance. A red spot gleams through the dun and dark air as you approach from the hill-side opposite. On coming nearer, you see it is the

foliage of the scarlet winter-creeper* over the walls; and it seems as though boon Nature had give the poor shivery leaves a warmer dress—to look the deep scarlet hues that they have donned in the place of their summer verdure. The wild an bright green briony, too, that rambled over those and brier of the garden hedge,—she has clad it is a vestment of wool; for such seems the fleecy appearance which it now wears, under the name of traveller's joy."

There was one, however, who, despite its wintry disguise, recognised that spot, that dwelling, and that garden-wild. Where the little brook tha skirts the last of these poured sluggishly along creeping ice-bound beneath its brittle shell of crys tal, a fair form pauses, and looks upon the well known spot-looks through the tear that rises a she regards what was once her home-but is now no more a home for her. Those features of loveli ness, shaded as they are by sorrow, bespeak the face of Gertrude. The winter around her wa not more desolate than the winter of her heart Or even had summer lit those mazes in all it lustre,-had heavens of harmony-had nature' music tuned their spirit to joy-yet, could th bright contagion have visited her abandonment, t

^{*} The vine-ivy, (Ampelopsis hederacea,) or Virginia-creeper

warm it into gladness or persuade it to turn to that strain? Not so: summer had been no summer to her; for objects are but bright and happy as the eyes of the Mind see them with a vision clouded or unclouded by its secret shadows. The chill sunray that feebly strove to smile on the rockbrow whence she looked, seemed in its faintness as though the irresolution of one that offers a consolation he knows is bootless!

When we last took leave of Gertrude she was under the roof, truly paternal, of the "good curate" of Lorton; and though we left her gradually recruiting in strength and spirits under the encouragement of his kindness, aided, too, by the frequent visits of the benevolent Golefield and Dr. Esdaile, yet, after all, she felt as one abandoned in the world. How could she feel otherwise, when she turned, as now, to the thought of the home she had forfeited, and which, though circumstances had rendered that thought at times painful, was still her home! From this, a mistaken sense of duty on the part of a parent, at once cold in heart as narrow in mind, had shut her callously out. Then, again, when she addressed her thoughts to him to whom she ought to have looked for all the fostering care that a husband supplies for the loss of a parent's presence, what was she met by but the harassment of uncertainty as to his fate, and a dread presentiment that storms the most fearful menac of which she must feel the bitterness? Fo she loved him—still the images recurred to what he had been, and how dear were the most passed with him—still her heart pleaded for—still it seconded the benign representations we remember Fenton's making for her consol—still hope supported and animated her, she fled to it, insecure as its gleam of confict was,—less, perhaps, from real conviction the was cherished for any considerable avail, than her love for him who possessed her heart, and whose succour and rescue she never ceased offit tacitly her vows to the dread Dispenser of human events.

Engaged with these thoughts, and improving with these feelings, Gertrude had taken her me choly ramble from the roof of Fenton, whad supplied her a home ever since the pewhen we last parted from her. Often did good curate accompany her on her accustor rambles over those once happy wilds, calling mind away from subjects that were painful to and engaging it insensibly on such as awaken more pleasing and healthful interest. When duties prevented him from sharing her wanders she often pursued them alone, and on these or sions, it is needless to say, her thoughts were

as we have described and reverted to—subjects that more nearly and painfully affected them.

She had extended her track to the heights above Buttermere, and for a moment paused, looking at her former home, as has been described, and which, though a parent's interdict forbad her entrance into it, was still acknowledged dear by the filial affection that lingered round a heart like her own, of the kindest impulses, no less than sentiments the most forgiving and generous. Other and yet tenderer remembrances, too, crowded upon her, and spoke in the tear we have already witnessed glisten in her eye, but which she now brushed away, and snatched herself from the spot, which was too much fraught with pain for her any longer to dwell upon it.

Onward she proceeded; yet still her wayward foot took the path that was little calculated to estrange her from remembrances painful as dear; for now the western ridge of Melbreak, where often had his step wandered with her own, and where first she had gleamed, visionlike, on him, rose before her. She hurried past it, and soon the hoarse murmur of Scale Force woke on her ear, where the angry waterfall dashes from the crag-summit, while at its base the reflected sun-ray weaves beautiful bows in the web of silvery spray. And here, as she had stood with him watching her kine drink in the smooth pool below, where the flood glides

onward, she had seemed to him as some it essence of light and beauty that had emerged if that glittering arch, akin to those angel forms Milton pictures as hanging in smiles over the r bow-span! But now that spray is but a me choly vapour; the sun that should tint it in beat is shrouded in the wide gloom around,—shrou as the sun of Gertrude's happiness and Gertrusmile;—and she flits now by that wild haunt, m like some fair Shade round the grave of par joyousness and health.

But she snatched her thoughts from the dar dream that had awhile held her over the spot, the savage echoes of the cliff now answered back waking thunder, while the heavens became black and more overcast, as menacing a storm. It hastened her step to gain some shelter, ere its it pending menace burst over her. To regain Lore before it overtook her was impossible, yet on a hurried, determining to take refuge at the fispot, be it cavern or shed, that should offer its How those weird echoes seemed to shout at her, if she had been some good as lovely spirit, that it trespassed on the grim boundary of a fellowship foul fiends, rejoicing in their pandemonium!

As she hurried along, driven as it were by blast, down the slanting cliff-side, she seemed frail and beautiful flower uptorn and whirled av in those mad eddies. Cavern howled to cavern the tale of its storm-haunted depths, to which the winds lent a tongue; while ever and anon those grim vaults were laid bare, at fearful intervals, by the blue lightning flakes that darted into them to lose themselves and there abide, as though they were flame-winged ministers of ill, that had hied to join the dark orgies of evil spirits like themselves within, and whose chorus spoke in storm and havoc, and winds of many voices—shrill, and loud, and desolate!

The mountain-torrent poured the big rain-flood in many a turbid cataract down the crag, and the fearful thunderpeal again boomed over the maze of elemental war, where yonder lake-waves held conflict with the wind that lashed them; and see! the hurricane tears up a loosened mass of the cragside; that, as it falls, drags along with it the trunk of some aged nodding tree, hastening to bury its top in the waters.

The lovely fugitive now hurried for shelter into the first recess the rock afforded her, and could scarcely repress a shriek as her entry was met by the ill-omened bird that is so often found making its lurking-place in these drear recesses. The raven flapped its heavy wings as it passed her with a hoarse croak, as if chiding her unbidden presence, and boding her "little luck" for the intrusion on his solitary retreat. It passed, and win through the storm to an aged oak, whose gaunt arms stretched them out-a spectral p for an inauspicious guest; and its lightning-sca trunk seemed to rear it as though familiar the flakes that coiled around it, so marked wa with lightning scars. Those flakes darted u as some huge snake of glittering scales and ra gliding volume, at one moment; at another, lightning blazed in a wider sheet of light, shew in ghastly illumination the tree and the bird fate, that seemed, as it vented its hoarse croaking to gather joy from the very hideousness of situation where all was tempest, din, and elemen conflict around it. To witness it, you might h deemed that some spirit-imp of the storm, such would have joyed the eyes of a Fuseli to conte plate, had taken on it the shape of that bird; such have we seen amidst gloom, darkling as present, haunting that melancholy steep call from tenants such as this, " Raven's Crag," -wh it frowns over the dun and lonesome waters Thirlmere.

Gertrude kept her eyes "undelighted," as Inton says, on this scene of savageness and temp for some little time, when she fancied she he cries as of people in pursuit of some one that I from them. She drew her cloak closely rou

her, and hastened, regardless of the pelting storm, to an eminence close by, to which a kind of rude natural staircase in the rock afforded an ascent. The spot was well known to her. From this she was able to discern that her supposition had been right; and what is more, the men and the fugitive who was in advance of them, were running along the ridge, on a level with the eminence which she had just gained. She was not surprised at this, as the voices had been borne to her ear from above and with the wind; and had they proceeded from an opposite direction, it is more than probable that she would have lost them, however near they might be.

It appeared to her, in the hasty conjecture she drew, that the fugitive had bent his flight towards Lorton or Buttermere, judging by the direction in which he was hurrying. It was not long before he came up to her. That brow—that form—that eye—in an instant she recognised him! Despite the sailor's disguise he wore, she knew at a glance that it was the form of him who possessed her fondest wishes, as his lot awakened her deepest fears.

This was not a time to sink,—not a time for a spirit such as Gertrude's, strengthened too by affection, to sink! In an instant, all her thoughts were, how she might second his escape—how she might baffle his pursuers. He had the stathem by a short distance. Her eye had no countered his without meeting the recognition look spoke. His foot seemed to falter as the he longed to stop, and rather surrender himse his pursuers, than lose the opportunity thus upectedly offered, of speaking to her.

"Away!" she exclaimed, hastily, and percei his inclination—" Away! speed on !—there! d those steps—immediately below is a cave form a passage through to the meer. Do not stop!" added, with a look and cry of agony; "but fly! for your life—for me! It is Gertrude m you."

"Can you yet love me? can you forgive-

"Yes, yes! fly!" she interrupted, as she wr her hands in agony.

Her words were not unheeded; the desc was soon achieved; the fugitive had quickly dis peared from the ken of his pursuers. They is seen him interchange, as they thought, a his word with the female whom they now expected meet; but she had withdrawn behind the proj tion of the rock beneath which, and winding do its side, was the descent which Hatfield (for it whimself) had taken.

As one of the men hurried to the brink, to serve which way the fugitive had gone, he li

recked that in the chasm below he looked upon his grave: some invisible hand dashed him from his balance down the steep! At the same moment the report of a gun sounded through the gloom on Gertrude's ear; but it was not heard by the other of her husband's pursuers, (for there had been two,)—he fell dead at her feet from a ball that had entered his breast.

Gertrude looked from her hiding-place to discover, if possible, from what hand the missile of death could have proceeded, when on the opposite height, and on the further side of the cleft, down which Hatfield had proceeded by the rock steps, and where the officer of justice had found an untimely grave, she recognised an old man, who appeared as though making, with what haste he could, to a descent on his side the chasm, in order, as it seemed to her, to reach the place of Hatfield's concealment.

She thought, at first, that there might be danger for her husband,—that perhaps the bullet which had dealt death to the myrmidon of justice had been discharged through mistake of its object, and had been intended for the fugitive; but she was relieved of this anxiety on seeing, after having hastened down the rock-steps with what speed she might, the figure of old Mike, who had now crossed the cleft by aid of an old broad trunk of a tree,

which served for a bridge. He was hastening wards the cavern-mouth where she now stood, within which Hatfield was concealed.

"Dear Mike!" she exclaimed, "I know I s to a friend in you!—He is safe!—he is here! us lose no time in hastening from this spot, an the first seaport we can come to be the dire of our steps."

Earnestly, hurriedly she spoke, as the old riner replied—" Ay, ay! so as the hounds of ju do not cross the path, that shall be our way! J whether I do not love the boy," he added, spea of Hatfield by this designation, as was his wand which, too, in its familiarity, bespoke the man's affection,—" Judge, I say, whether I him or not, when I have placed my own nes jeopardy to save him."

But here they were joined by the fugitive, grasped Mike's hand, while he pressed Gert wildly to his heart, unable to speak for some to thank them for his deliverance. Gertrude I almost lifeless on his neck.

"This is giving your life for me indeed, M at length he said, for he had overheard M words. "But I will not stir till we remove, a best may, all causes of suspicion;" and then, locat the gun—"I heard the report. Did you this, then, for my preservation?"

Mike nodded assent.

"I thought so. Well; there is not a moment to be lost! Speed; take away the remains of the man who has met his death from the ball, and consign him——"

And here he started, as the mangled figure of the other of his pursuers presented itself at the rockbase, where he had met his death-bed.

"Start not!" said Gertrude, who had come to herself again, while Mike now left them to take up the body of the man he had shot. "If the hand of a wife is not willing to sacrifice the life of him who is seeking the death of her husband, she deserves not the name!"

"Gertrude?"

"Ay!" she continued, as her countenance in its noble animation spoke even more than her words; "it is Gertrude addresses you; but not the Gertrude you left her—except in her truth to you,—but one who has been schooled by suffering to consider the world she had once looked on as a scene of happiness but a wilderness of pain!—to feel that she is but the ghost of her former self, haunting the spot of a former more happy existence!—to live no longer for herself, but for you!"

"It is the same noble spirit still that speaks. Do not say you are altered, Gertrude. From the first moment I knew and loved you, I knew your spirit to be one of unshaken truth, sincerity, and

love! That beautiful cheek is paler indeed, a bitterly must I accuse myself that it is so; but the heart is warm, is glowing as ever in truth. It m know happiness less than it did; it may have be dimmed by a sadder shade; but the deep, the tender feeling, the truth, the love that wou hazard life itself for the lost, abandoned, hunt fugitive——"

"It is my duty!" interrupted Gertrude, as a proceeded to speak with a calm resolution and dinified composure which evinced the nobleness spirit within her, unawed by the difficulties, us shrinking before the perils, that beset her he band's path. "It is my duty," she said, "to fe as I do. I am one with yourself—made one by laws, human and divine. By a bond such as the am I sacredly pledged to shield you from ill—suffer with you!—and though all the world deserand persecute you, it is the very crisis in which should stand firmly by your side."

"More than woman!—more than wife! M guardian spirit and aid-divine! can I say how d voted, solemnly as ardently, my heart is towar you, when I feel that I am worthy less to love the adore you. You can, then, forgive—forget wh I am!"

"Have I not said so in what I have already expressed? But away,—the time is precious! Now word you have ever expressed of hope to me, the

you might surmount the perils that beset you, has been lost on me. Your letter has been read again and again, and still new hope has been gleaned from it, that escape might yet be secured you. You there held out prospects of happiness, of content, if the barrier of escape were once passed. Let us struggle, then, to pass it now. This gloom and confusion of the elements befriends our flight. It has already befriended yours thus far. You were hurrying in a direction that might have been fatal—"

"I was trying," he interrupted, earnestly, "to take Lorton in my flight, in order to catch a glimpse of you!"

In fact, Quandish's surmise had been right; and the alarm of Cappergill or Hatfield having been raised by Miss Howbiggen's inquisitiveness, he instantly fled from town, in this direction, and with this object.

"I surmised so," replied Gertrude; "but see— Heaven has sent me beforehand to your path!"

"And yet more, to preserve me—to snatch me from my pursuers! Be still my guardian angel! In the path you direct I will follow! But stay—here is Mike."

At this moment the old mariner returned, with the grim load of the body which had been deprived of life beneath his unerring aim. The remains of the other of his late pursuers were extricat Hatfield from the bottom of the cleft where it its rugged bed being one of those channels see by the winter torrents in the cliff, peculirocky districts; and the mountain maiden leway through the cavern, whose opposite enout upon the lake.

With no other funeral lament than that whice raised by the yelling winds and sleet, the cowere consigned with hollow plash to the deep grave of the waters; and ere the circles had away over the spot where they sunk, the fugwere fast urging their way beneath the cabrows and rugged peaks of the cliff. These for a savage canopy, at once to screen them from servation, should any further pursuit be advantant from the fury also of the storm that a above them. Their steps took a north-west direction, it being their intention to reach the coast as soon as possible, and take ship osten for Bristol or Plymouth, their ultimate or being to cross the channel to the Continent.

At the first convenient opportunity, Gert looked forward to writing to Mr. Fenton, in o to quiet any alarm that might have arisen i mind, at her protracted absence from Lorton, to inform him of the step she had taken, as i might be consistent with the safety of her hush At the suggestion of old Mike, too, it was resolved that she should disguise herself as well as Hatfield, in the garb of a seaman; and this was to be effected at the first village they should deem it safe to stop at that night, and which was at least nine or ten miles distant.

We will here snatch a moment to say a word accounting for Mike's presence, a little while ago, so opportunely to the relief of Hatfield. was taking, then, one of his solitary rambles, rifle in hand, to aim at the stray eagle that sometimes was seen to wheel round the pike-summits in the neighbourhood. On his way, he had witnessed (previously to Gertrude's discovery of it) the pursuit that was being made after her husband, and accordingly hastened onward to his assistance. We may add, that since we last met him, he had remained at his dismal, solitary retreat, the mountain cell, where we have erewhile found him. His thoughts had constantly been engaged on Hatfield and his lovely bride, to see whom he had frequently wandered to Lorton, sharing the interest we have already witnessed as shewn her by Esdaile and Golefield.

But to return to the fugitives. Onward they hied—in hope, in fear, in haste; Destiny dogging them at the heels!—the eyes of Fate resting darkly on them!

CHAPTER X.

"Kirk-Alloway was drawing nigh,
Whare ghaists and howlets nightly cry.
And now he saw an unco' sight,
A murderer's banes in gibbet airns,
Wi' mair o' awefu'."

BURNS.

ERE nightfall they gained the village where Gatrude was to assume her sailor's disguise. At the first break of dawn they sallied forth again on the fearful track, little deeming that their movement were matter of espial. Precautionary injunction had been given through every considerable villaging the district, to mark all persons that passed under any circumstances tending to excite suppicion. The privacy sought by the whole part and the change of dress of one of them, however much they imagined observation had been eluded did not pass without comment, and it is probable they would have been stopped and questioned he they not made their escape at the very earlier

period at which light was afforded them for proceeding. They hurried along by devious paths over a weary though romantic way of moorland and crag.

At last they came to a spot where three roads met, called in the country a "want-way," and here arose a bitter perplexity as to which of them led to the coast; for there was no direction, no friendly finger-post to point out to them an escape from their difficulty. Mike himself, who was the only one of the party that knew anything of this particular district, was in a state of uncertainty no less than his companions. The roads, so far from running at different points of the compass from each other, most provokingly ran nearly parallel to each other for some distance, their ultimate declinations, wherever they might take place, being as yet equally unapparent and uncertain.

"Well! take any direction rather than delay longer, so as it lies away from the quarter whence we have come!" said Gertrude in an agony of impatience greater than even that of Hatfield himself.

"It is a 'toss up,' said Mike, "as to which it is best to take;" and then, after a moment's pause, he continued, according to his usual superstitious turn of mind,—"The right is the luckiest; let us take the right."

So the right branch was, in accordance we sage divination, pursued without further detion, except that Hatfield remarked—"Hatbeen on horseback, we would have flung the on our horses' necks and let them choose I have often been thus conducted safely difficulties of the way, from which I should connot have known of myself how to get extricated.

"Ay! God is with the dumb creatures," re Mike, "more than with men! All our is cannot act so much to the purpose at times as instinct. Reason can work (look you) bette doubt, on movements known, planned before and understood; but where all is doubt an certainty, give me the instinct of the dumb tures for the surest chance of going safely. God's guidance leads them, unconscious as the of it."

So saying, they pursued their way across and barren moor, with sable clumps of Scott scattered over it.

The fancy of a German wizard might we here unearthly shapes through the murky air catch the fearful echoes of the fiend huntsme the melancholy blasts that sweep it. It would made you shiver to cast your ken round the and darkling bound. A fen-fire started a their swampy path, and danced before them

brief space over the peat-bed, in a sort of unearthly glee, as they looked at it with thoughts little cheerful on their part; for it seemed like a light held out by some ill-spirit to lure them from the fair track of safety, and betray them to harm and doom.

So thought Hatfield, as he kept his eyes on the narrow beaten path that wound through the fern, and night shade, and wild broom, as they passed, avoiding the wilder bound to which the foul spirit seemed to beckon him astray for his destruction in that false glare.

On they went, their track now winding along the brink of a chasm deep and dark as the gulf of Futurity, and Hatfield thought it was the darkest thing of which he had ever been conscious, except the bosom's gulf where Guilt's dark secrets lie.

They came to a forest, where the grey wan light of dawn was breaking, and the leaves were shivering in the raw morning air. That dim maze—it looked as if the spirits of the dead claimed it as their grim trysting spot, to plain over past woes, whether they gibbered under the chill light of the moon or beneath the shroud of fearful darkness.

What a scene of desolation spread before the fugitives! Those bare forest trunks as they rose far and wide seemed to form a kind of natural mausoleum over the death of all joy and bloom of

earth, languishing as she did beneath its wint pall. The comrades shuddered as they now looke up where the shrill blast whistled round a gibbe and shook the chains that rattled with a heavy, du clank against the trunk by the way-side. The wind shifted the position of the skeleton shar which the chains held, and placed it facing then and as the ray fitfully glistened over the eye-socket it seemed to glare on them in ghastly speculation As Hatfield looked at it, it seemed to grin in hor rible mockery of himself, and still his heart whis pered an ominous warning, which he tried in vai to subdue as he made an effort to speak wit jocularity; but how forced it was, the hargard painful expression of the brow, that ill corresponde with the smile on the lip, declared. What aspec in our human feature so assimilates to that of fiends, as the fell distortion of unnatural joy!

"Thou grim chatterer," he said to the skeleton does thy gibbering mean that thou wouldst cal me to thy side? How can I answer thee? Who can tell but that I may one day take my place by thee, and yield thee grin for grin in ghastly fellowship!"

"Whisht, man, and leave your unseemly jests!pray, rather, for better destinies!" said old Mike
in the reverential and lowered tone of superstitious
alarm; "whisht, I tell you; you never know how

near danger may be, nor how near an evil prediction may be to its fulfilment. Never tempt the powers above by a jest. Look at those two ravens hard by—they seem to tell you so. Get to the right hand, you sable destiny-mongers! Ay,—won't ye?" he added, as he looked at the birds of ill-omen, who sat on the bough where the skeleton of the gibbeted felon swung, and croaked out a sort of hideous chorus in concert with the moan of the blast, and the dead sound of the clattering bones and clanking irons.

The birds stirred not. They seemed to Mike as if marking some dark decree of an impending doom. And scarcely had they passed the spot, when Gertrude, looking round, said—

"I think, as far as the dim light will let me, I see some one at the head of the forest walk."

"Where?" asked Mike and Hatfield together, turning simultaneously round, and looking intently into the wan and dubious distance.

"I feel for all the world," said Mike, "as if some spectre dogged our way."

"I should be very glad, Mike, if it were nothing more substantial!" said Hatfield, with a forced smile, which still vainly strove against a certain melancholy presentiment of ill that it was difficult to surmount or subdue.

"I hope," he continued, with the same lip-mirth

that was not of the heart,—"I hope it may no some figure of flesh and blood set upon our trawith others too, doubtless, in his rear. As spectres, why, this spot seems to be quite su to such company, and I should not complain falling in with them. Here is their domain! to fee simple'—eh, Mike?—and you, Gertrudayou would rather meet an army of spirits, or e flends, than a single hostile spirit of the race man, or a single fiend in human shape?"

But Gertrude replied not, except as to what discerned of the figure in the distance, wh movements she was too intent on tracing to h any other speculations.

"I have lost it now," she said, her eyes be still fixed on the spot; "I lost it just where clump of oaks runs out into the way, and make wind round their circuit—but there—there it again!"

And Mike thought he did see a figure just si itself from behind the trees, and as hastily w draw. "But my eyes are dim," he said, " fancy does much where the senses fail."

"I should prefer at once," said Hatfield, "pairing to the spot and ascertaining if any on in reality watching our track; for such I sho conceive to be the case if, as you imagine, you any one look after us and then withdraw, on

ceiving we observed his movements. Could I lay hands on any lurking ruffian that dogged our way, by Heavens I would bind him to the trunk of the first tree, and let him console himself for his rashness as he best might, by watching the sun rise over yonder——"

But here a clamp of horses' hoofs woke on their ear, and Mike at this moment having turned his head round in the direction of the sound, perceived that which occasioned him to exclaim—

"Fly for your life, down yonder alley through the thicket, to the left! It is the nearest outlet for escape! They are upon us!—I see them!—fly for your life!—never mind us—we are safe!"

It took but a moment to persuade Hatfield to hasten down the narrow-winding path he was directed to pursue. He had scarcely left his companions two minutes, before three men on horse-back now rode up to them, and after looking searchingly at them, asked "where was their late companion?" As Mike was about to say, "that he had no other companion than the lad (for such Gertrude in her disguise seemed to be) with him," the man that had addressed him, stopped him short—

"Your denial proves to me that the person who has just left you is the man I want; I saw him leave you a moment past, and he cannot be far away."

"It must be down that narrow opening went," said the other fellow, "for he could have vanished by any other passage from this be walk we saw him in, not a moment or two Do you and Bill," he continued, turning to third myrmidon of the party, "go down the pait is wide enough for one man to ride along, leads out to the forest border. Make haste a and you must have him."

Mike felt a shiver come over his spirit at the words, as much as to warn him that the fated was soon to be at hand which he had so long fully awaited. He remained in anxious expectation, to see whether or not the men would emerge from the forest shades with their captive. A toll shot now echoed through the wood, and span affray was going on. The officers had, the fore, found the object of their pursuit. Mil and Gertrude's anxiety increased; their hes beat faster and faster; the old mariner conscarcely support the anguished spirit of lovely charge; indeed, he had a hard struggle maintain in supporting his own.

They walked restlessly along the path town the passage Hatfield had taken, and away from officer who remained behind. In a short time sound of a horse's hoofs, beating aside the bust arrested their attention, and from an outle little higher up the main avenue than that which the officers had entered, who should appear riding forward but Hatfield himself. He urged his horse from the wood covert full against the officer who remained in the avenue, and put an end to all resistance on his part by shooting him dead on the spot. By this act he merely anticipated a similar intended assault on the part of the officer, who had raised his pistol to check Hatfield's career.

This circumstance had scarcely taken place, than urging his steed by Gertrude's side, he stooped from the saddle-bow, and snatching her up by her slender waist, placed her before him, and away he galloped down the dun forest-glade, and was quickly lost along its sallow-tinted vista, beyond the reach of his pursuers.

"God bless you, Mike!—God bless you!" he cried, as he started onwards; "we meet on the coast—at Ravenglass—you know the—" and the words were lost to the ear of the old mariner, who hastily replied—

" Ay, ay !-away, away !-for your life !"

The echoes of his steed's clamp, no less than his words, had now faded on Mike's ear, as he was proceeding to make the best of his way from the forest.

The baffled and dismayed myrmidons of justice,

who had entered the thicket to secure their were now returned desperately wounded from affray that had plainly taken place. The onleading the single horse left between them on which his companion was placed helpless, from a fall sustained in some struggle, or probably from the pistol shot heard by Ger and Mike.

How this might be, however, the old malittle concerned himself about learning, his vanxiety being now to betake himself to the spethe coast which had been already agreed on for embarkation of Hatfield. With this view, he already made his way (as we have just witnes from the avenue, and was deep in the wood this speeding his way to the forest border, before officers had returned from their late pursu Hatfield. Dashing the tear away from his enhe went along, he exclaimed—

"God preserve him; he deserves to escape is a brave fellow. But it is all of no avail." must have him, I fear, at last. Not the bracan fight against his doom for ever. His demust conquer him at last!"

CHAPTER XI.

"If his prayer
Be granted, a faint meteor will arise,
Lighting him o'er the deep . . .
But, that shout

Bodes-

" Mah. Evil, doubtless, like all human sounds."
SHELLEY.

"Did you say, Sir, you were going by the Glasgow packet, Sir?—or the Bristol, Sir?" asked a smirking, prating waiter at the inn at Ravenglass.

"I said neither the one nor the other, friend; trouble not thyself, I pray thee, about my movements," replied an elderly gentleman, habited in Quaker costume, but bearing a singular resemblance to the venerable Mr. Jackson, which we remember first of all exciting our curiosity at Buttermere church some time ago, and whom we afterwards met seated on the style by the wayside subsequently to Hatfield's escape from the church;

and lastly, whom we witnessed in conversation Woodsland at Windermere. Having thus, thought, turned aside the meddlesome inquir the waiter, he addressed some words to a fe also in the guise of one of the society of Fri and who, we must suppose, was the old go man's daughter. But the waiter was not so to be silenced, being as officious a varlet as made mischief or occasioned annoyance by hi pertinence.

"Oh, beg pardon, Sir; I only thought, Sir if you were for Bristol, Sir, you would not be to understand that you may have the compara gentleman who——"

"Nay, nay, friend, I am bound for an quarter than Bristol. I thank thee much, would be sorry for thee to trouble thyself a my movements. Esther, my dear," he continuously turning to his daughter, "it is almost time for to be settling our account here. Waiter, I know what we have to pay."

"Certainly, Sir; yes, Sir; but don't suppose, that it is any trouble to accommodate any gentle in our house. Oh, no, Sir; and so, Sir, thin possibly you might be going in the same direct as the gentleman down stairs, I thought I w just ask you, Sir, in order to acquaint him—

"Thanks to thee, friend! thanks to thee."

—"For he asked me if I knowed whether any one was a-going aboard either of the packets. I means, Sir, the Glasgow or Bristol—he might have said the Liverpool too, Sir; but I'm not quite certain, Sir,"

" Nay, nay ! never mind, friend, never mind !"

"Well, Sir, he says, says he, 'I'm a-going myself by the Bristol, and would gladly join any one going the same way;' so, says I, 'I believe, now you speak of it, there is a gentleman a-going! but, if you please, Sir, I'll just step up and inquire?"

"Thou art very good, very good, friend—I much thank thee,—but would more particularly be obliged to thee if thou wouldst just at present let me have my account. Esther, my child."

"In one moment, Sir," interrupted the waiter, "but perhaps you would like to see the gentleman up stairs,' says I to the gentleman down stairs. 'Oh yes,' says he; 'I shall be very happy, if I am not intruding.' 'Oh, no intrusion, I'm sure,' says I—"

"Really, friend, thou art the most accommodating ministrant I ever met yet at any inn in the three kingdoms."

"Not at all, Sir! always happy to please the gentlemen that puts up at our inn. 'Well, and so,' says the gentleman down-stairs, 'the coffee-room is very full; suppose you mention, with my compliments to the gentleman above, that I will join him

if we are to be fellow-passengers,' and so comes, just to propose—"

"Upon my word, both thou, my friend, as worthy gentleman down stairs, are most kind just let me recall to thy memory that I has formed thee I am not about to take my pass Bristol; and yet more, that I have twice thee for my account."

"Beg a thousand pardons, Sir, for det you one moment more than you desired, on happy to accommodate. Bill shall be br in a moment, Sir. I'll only just step dow prevent the gentleman from coming up, for coffee-room was very crowded, and he seemed to shift his quarters."

So saying, he bustled out of the room, an Quaker and his daughter were at length reof his troublesome presence; for, in truth, his ousness seemed fraught with some little dang them, to judge by the words now hastily addr by the worthy Obadiah to his fair child, Esth

"We have not a moment to delay. See! is Mike's signal. Look towards the sea, and will discern a little boat with a small red per flitting over the bow. He waits to row us of the first vessel we can come up to, and boundary coast but this!—the further off the better

"I see it, I see it," exclaimed Esther, as

pressed closer to her side the arm on which she leaned, while they now hastened from the room down stairs, hoping to avoid the threatened visitation of the "gentleman below," who found the coffee-room so inconveniently crowded. Scarcely, however, had they set foot on the landing-place outside the door when they were met by the prating, smirking waiter again, who, with an officious grin on his countenance, commenced—

"Beg pardon, Sir, but the 'gentleman below' said he thought he had the pleasure of your acquaintance, when I described you to him, and——"

"Nay, nay, friend !- I know him not !- I know him not."

"But I know you!" said a voice proceeding from a small room, the door of which was open, at the side of the landing-place where this brief and hasty colloquy between Obadiah and the waiter took place, and the former, as he looked round, recognised in the face of the speaker the identical effigies of—Quandish.

"Nay, nay!" continued Obadiah, now proceeding to brush down stairs with an expedition surprising in one of his years, and appearing rather to support his youthful daughter, than seek support from her, "I tell thee, friend, I know thee not, nor canst thou know me." "Ha, ha!" ejaculated Quandish, with an ing laugh, "we shall see if we are not bett quainted than you would, perhaps, find it agree to acknowledge!" And scarcely had the escaped his lips than out stepped from the little room two or three fellow myrmidons of tice, who now pounced on their prey, while swelled the chorus of Quandish's insulting is and Hatfield, (for it was himself,) Hatfield, the yet indomitable Hatfield, found himself at lessecured beyond the chance of any further escape.

He was not taken, however, until after a d rate struggle, which, of course, called every in and sojourner in the house to the fray on the case. But all resistance was in vain; the last of Protean shapes that the captive had assumed Quaker was stripped from him, and exhibited in his own proper person.

Adroit in his escapes, as we have witned him, no less than in his transformations, the was at length come when he should be fir secured.

Gertrude, for the fair Quakeress was no of than herself, clung to him as the officers were about to drag him away, in order to convey ultimately to the nearest magistrate for his of mittal. She was at length removed from him sensible, and when she came to herself again, opened her eyes to meet the anxious inquiring glance of old Mike, who bent over her, where she was lying on the seaman's humble pallet in the hut where they now both were.

It appears that Mike having, according to the agreement previously made between himself and Hatfield, repaired to Ravenglass, had hoisted the little pennon from the boat in which he was to have conveyed him and Gertrude to any packet sailing on its way from England.

Thus far we have already been able to glean; it remains to be mentioned that Mike having waited much beyond the period at which his signal had been hoisted, began to apprehend danger, and accordingly, consigning his boat to the care of a brother seaman, he hastened up to the inn, which was situated close upon the sea-shore, and was speedily made acquainted with all the circumstances that had taken place relative to the capture of Hatfield.

The first object now of his care was Gertrude. He had taken charge of her on her being separated from the arms of her husband, where she was held by him till taken away by main force, and amidst the brutal insults of Quandish.

From this moment had the good old mariner watched over her, with the tender attention of a parent. He had taken her to a hut which he prepared for her reception, and to which he re usually on his visits to Ravenglass, which we unfrequent, to see his old comrades of the se

As he would watch over her in her mise insensibility, the good old man would say, tear stole into his eye—"Ay! did I not so The storm has come down at last!—and the must go to wreck! To think, just at the mound when escape seemed sure—when we were now ay, with wind and tide in our favour, tow port of safety,—to think that at this 'nick of the 'yellow flag' should have been hoisted, a rovers should have borne down on us—mas strike sails and sunk our craft! after so mound goodly chase in which we had outstripped Well, well; it was to be!"

And here the old man's attention was ditowards offering what rude consolation he to the unhappy wife of him whose fate he lam. By the assiduity of Mike, and the attentio procured for her from other quarters, Gengradually rallied; but if there was one constance more than another that tended to rean and encourage her, it was the whisper of breathed to her by Mike, that she might ye sibly afford some succour to the condition, for as indeed it was, of her husband.

To cherish but the inkling of such a the

was sufficient, in a bosom like Gertrude's, to urge her to the resolve of attempting to act upon it. If the old man, indeed, in his own mind tacitly confessed the undertaking to be desperate, yet, when he perceived that its attempt was all that gave a return of strength or spirit to his lovely charge, he at once determined to aid her in it, and accompany her in its execution.

The nature of this resolve must be left to our ensuing pages to explain.

The second of Sapi root feet for a second of the second of

CHAPTER XII.

"I am not yet of Percy's mind, the Hotspur of the het hat kills me some six or seven dozen of Scots at a by washes his hands, and says to his wife, 'Fie upon the life! I want work!' 'Oh, my sweet Harry,' says she many hast thou killed to-day?' 'Give my roan horse a says he, and answers, 'some fourteen!' an hour after—

CONTRACTOR AND ADMINISTRATION AND

a trifling cost and in a short space of time, to a distance where health and recreation may be sought, mocking at the foul fogs of the smoky city, and placing the doctor's calling at a discount! Little recks he that he is reaping the fruit of efforts, to complete which, science, with " careful brow," has thought and toiled over for years.

Again he plods down the spacious ways of the modern Babylon, and takes, as a matter of course, (reckless varlet!)-ay, takes as a matter of course, all the comfort and luxury which her goodly pavements, her spacious areas, and costly edifices, delighting the eye, present! Little does he bestow one thought of consideration (such is the selfishness of our common nature) on the pains it has cost to rear this world of comfort and luxury. Little does he picture the "immane barathirum" of the dark narrow ways that erewhile existed, imperfectly lighted with dingy little oil lamps, serving rather to render darkness visible than expel the gloom. How can he, when his senses are dazzled by the gas-illumination that blazes through the town, to shew spacious pavements skirting the pomp of palaces? He is lost in the glitter and gaiety; and, selfish as he is, may perhaps be excused his forgetfulness of the dinginess, inconvenience, and discomfort of a former day, in the cheerfulness, convenience, and decoration, of the scene immediately around him. It is to an imaginatic however, no small subject of interest and ment, to call up the labyrinth of ungainling perplexity of the past—to picture to it painful plodders through slough-beset, distilled passes, which the mighty British I at the period of our story, for the me exhibited.

Truly, if the Loudon of to-day may be Babylon from its splendour, it might be "Babel" from its "confusion" of a pass and to this Babel, then, we once again retu

Accordingly, we proceed to take our conwards St. James's Park. Not, (as at the day,) do we pass through a space of pomp, down upon by palaces,—the Athenæum side, the United Service Club House on the northward, the splendid vista of goodly dward southward, the façade called Carlton Thot, when arrived within the precincts of the are we met by terraces of pomp and beautying a sweep of palaces, and justifying the Babylonian."

Nay, such is the power of association, were an easy matter to imagine ourselves ancient Babylon, were we but to place the cession in the "Semiramide" upon that balustrade, with Pasta for the Babylonish

and Rossini's magnificent strains sounding in our

But away with these visions, and turn we to the dark, melancholy swamp which St. James's Park, at the period of our story, presented, and which now meets us, instead of the decorated maze of mingled palace and garden to which a later day has given birth.

It was, then, along the border of the "Birdcage Walk" that a person was walking in quest, gentle reader, of—adventures!—how well he was calculated for such a pursuit or not, let his appearance and character testify. There are many yet living who will recognise the portrait (we dare say) before it is finished. He was about six feet two, in the first instance; of a most menacing aspect, and rendered formidable by the invasion, over nearly all his face, of a pair of huge bushy black whiskers; his nose was a tremendous aquiline one, as fiery at its end as his temper, and seemed to blaze forth a challenge to the whole world, of "pull me if you dare, and I'll dash your brains out!"

Yes, gentle reader, you may start; but the menace just suggested is no spark of fancy, lit up, as you might suppose, by the said blazing feature, but a dangerous reality, at once vouched for by the huge club brandished in the hand of its bearer, and denominated by him his "walking-stick!" and with truth might it be called so, for it occasioned

most persons who came near it to "wallfrom the perilous neighbourhood of "the lord" (for such he was) who wielded it, as f their legs could carry them.

Fast, however, as they were willing to secure retreat, it was difficult at all times to avoid overtaken by our noble adventurer, who was certain either to imagine a cause of offeno pick a quarrel.

His stalwart wrist, as he brandished his "wai stick," was in a constant fidget to exercise itsethe amusement of pommelling any antagonic could find; at least, so it should seem, to judge the twirl he perpetually gave it, very much as a player at the "quarter-staff" might do, or an kern, twirling his "shilaleh," as he rushes from the sheen," or whiskey shop, to knock the brain of a tithe collector. This "pretty little rattan" it should be observed for the fidelity of the pict about as thick as a stout man's wrist, and knotted for nearly a foot and a half upwards the spike which tipped it at the bottom.

Imagine, in a civilized state of society, a men of a Christian community—though we cannot a civilized being himself—bearing about a wer of such a nature. At any rate, the picture is sistent—the man was worthy of the instrumand the instrument of the man, and they were cordingly inseparable! To look at the character in question, you would imagine he was some savage, dressed indeed in the garb of an humanized race, though with certain eccentric deviations from the prescribed form—so complete an Orson did he appear.

His waistcoat was made of shaggy bear-skin, double-breasted, and with a double row of mother-of-pearl buttons. This was apparent when the huge, thick fur-collared surtout was flung open,—which it generally was, in order to give more play to the arm of the noble combatant, in the encounters, so many of which it was his delight to seek. He was the terror of the footpads all round the western portion, in particular, of the metropolis, and Hercules himself never held a more decisive argumentum baculinum in his hand, to quell a marauding or insolent spirit, than the noble Orson. Peace be to his manes !—a pleasanter man, when he chose not to take affront, (mark!) never entered a social circle!

He was at times remarkable for his dandyism of dress; and his high red-heeled boots (the fashion of the time) and gilt spurs, quite à la chevalier, afforded a singular contrast to his savage, menacing aspect. But these moods of forbearance, and "lucid intervals" of humanization, were but temporary. He was too glad to relapse into the fierce

and adventure-loving being we have depict

The fact is, he was endowed with imme strength, and found pleasure accordingly in exercise of it, as is the case universally, whether physical or moral endowments; for, whatever tal we feel ourselves adepts in, we have a concomit pleasure in exercising.

Now, in the instance of the noble lord, the would have been very well if he would but he confined himself to battering a brick wall; but found no mark so agreeable for the exercise of battering-ram of a bludgeon, as the numskulls of majesty's liege subjects; and which, if he son times found them perhaps little less hard the brick-bats, yet he can scarcely stand exculpated making so free in trying his strength on the Conflict, in fact, was his element; forbearant and tranquillity, a real and painful effort to him.

Of course, however embarrassing his society we found, generally speaking, he was on his good be haviour at Carlton House in particular, where we shall perhaps in due time fall in with him: how be a disciple of Messrs. Gall and Spurzheim would even there, have pronounced at a glance that possessed the organ of combativeness.

Such was he in person and garb. His boots, the present occasion, it may be imagined, had r the dandy feature of red-heels. No; he wore stout, thick shoes, whose hob-nails and iron tips imprinted formidable marks in the mud of the Birdcage Walk, and shewed the dimensions of the wearer, akin to the mould of a Hercules or Polypheme. "Ex pede Herculem!"

His eyes glared, like a tiger's, through the obscurity of the hour, for it was twilight, (his favourite period for adventure-seeking,) and their fire was only equalled by the effulgence of his nose, which was a very beacon of affray wheresoever he moved.

Coarse blue trousers of shaggy cloth completed his nether man; and thus equipped and armed, he stalked forward, angry that no wandering thief, or roysterer from a coffee-house, had crossed his path. However, he had not remained long in this painful state of impatience before a cry as of a female voice reached his ear.

So far from exciting any "tender regret," on his part, that helplessness should be assailed, our hero was only delighted at the thought that violence would be chastised by his arm. It was not long before he arrived at the spot whence the cry had proceeded. He saw a young female struggling with a man. One blow of his "rattan" felled the ruffian, who was seizing (as his lordship supposed) the girl's purse, and laid him sprawling insensible on the ground.

"The chain!—the golden chain!" she cri
"the man who has run off, has got it whim!"

This was new delight to the noble Hercules. few rapid strides soon brought him up to his versary.

"Scoundrel! give up that chain!" nor did man wait for a second summons, for he flung chain backwards, where it adhered in the mud, a glittered so brilliantly, that for the moment noble lord's attention was called to it from a fugitive ruffian. While he stooped to pick it the man endeavoured to make good his escape, it was not permitted to do this, until his pursuer h succeeded in giving him a cut with the "ratta that laid open the side of his face and temples, j as the thief was running round the corner Storey's Gate.

"There is a slight mark of my remembrance you, my friend, which I think you will carry w you till your dying day!" said his noble chastis "And now for the poor girl. Let us see how s fares."

So saying, he returned to the spot where to damsel he had rescued, like a knight of old, we standing. The ruffian he had first punished he in the interval of his absence so far recovered as be able to crawl away, dreading the return of l assailant and the possible approach also of the police.

The first words she exclaimed, after expressing how much she was beholden to her stout deliverer, were, "The chain!—and have you been able to recover that?" When she saw it in his hand, she renewed her expressions of gratitude for his assistance, and testified much joy at its recovery.

"Why, one would imagine," he said, as he restored it her, and assisted in adjusting it round her neck, whence it had been torn,—" one would imagine it was an amulet or talisman. I suppose the jewel I saw glittering in the cross attached to it must be some magic opal at least! What is the meaning of this, my fair creature? Tell me its history; which is also, doubtless, your own."

As she was about to reply, an interruption took place, in consequence of the approach of an old man with some of the police, or rather watchmen, whom it appears he had hastened to fetch, in order to lend assistance to the efforts he had first of all made in repelling the ruffians. This, indeed, he had successfully done, old as he was, for some time, and they had withdrawn; but it should seem that on his leaving his fair comrade, to bring the police up to the spot, they had watched his movements and returned to the assault.

"You are her father, I suppose?" said Lord

Dromedford, (such was his name,) as the old advanced.

"I would willingly supply the place of on far as loving the dear child and keeping her harm," he replied, as he embraced the fair o of Lord Dromedford's succour.

"Well," continued his lordship; "it will satisfactory to you to know that the scoundrels were robbing her have decamped; and or them, I think, has received a mark across his by which you (addressing himself to the wamen) will readily be enabled to detect him, if look about you."

"Ay, ay!" replied the foremost of the wa men; "your lordship has left the marks of; hand-writing on the mazards of not a few of willins! I warrant you, they'll find it hard v to rub them out again. But come along, old; theman—you and your daughter—out of this place we'll put you in your right road!" So say the watchman led the way from the park towathe Westminster outlet, followed by the will party.

The reason of the girl's anxiety for the record of the chain was explained by her, in obedience Lord Dromedford's inquiries; and from the integrand feeling it excited even in the "rude breast' such an Orson as the noble savage, it may be a

posed to be of no common character, nor involving consequences of any ordinary feature. What these were, the subsequent events of our story will testify.

"You, then," he replied, at the conclusion of her relation,-" you are the wife of that ill-fated man? By that countenance, which I thought so lovely when I first came up to your assistance, I am not surprised to find in you the celebrated 'flower of Buttermere,' whose name has been so much in the mouths of all persons since this unhappy affair has transpired. For your sake, I wish Hatfield all success in the object of this your expedition. I am myself to be at a party at the Prince of Wales's, and will not fail to urge every argument I can in favour of your suit,-a noble one for you to makethe reprieve of a husband. Hatfield is a brave as well as talented fellow, and I declare I wish he may escape! As for you, my good old man," he continued, "the kindness you have shewn this lovely and unhappy creature are much to your honour, and if it is in my power to serve you in any way, I shall be happy."

"I thank you much, my Lord," replied the old mariner, (for it is needless to explain that it was Mike himself,) "but you cannot serve me more than in serving her, or the errand we are both come on." And here it was explained, that after their arrive in town, the first object of their inquiry was Home Secretary's office, for the purpose of furthing their petition and suit for the reprieve alrest mentioned. Hence it was that we find them the spot where they now are, having taken direction of the Green Park, and subsequently James's, in order to arrive by the shortest of from their quarters in town (situate near former park) at the official residence of the minis

On Mike's statement of this circumstance, the moble companion at once proceeded with them the Home Secretary's office; but as it was let the private secretary, to whom his lordship him spoke, gave him little hopes of having the petit looked at till the following day,—the minister be at "the House." However, the petition was let Meantime, it was agreed upon by the whole pathat an application for the desired object should made in a quarter where private interest appear to hold out more hope of success than any office clemency.

The circumstances of this application we are a yet at liberty to unfold, nor the quarter in whi it was to be made; suffice it to say, it was to made by Gertrude herself, and was connected we the history of the "precious chain" which, it I been seen, she prized so much, and which I

noble rescuer, consequently, was almost justified in designating a "talisman."

"I only hope," he said to Gertrude, as he now took leave of her, "that the interest of myself and that of the person, too, to whom you are about to apply, may together prevail on his Royal Highness."

So saying, he directed the watchman to see Mike and his lovely charge conducted safely back to their quarters, which were situated at the furthest (that is, the western) end of Piccadilly, and at no very great distance from Devonshire House; hence we find that, in their late progress through the parks, they did but follow a track contiguous to their spot of abode—the Green Park almost facing the lodging they had taken. What motives could have induced them to fix on this particular quarter for their brief sojourn, will be made more apparent in due time.

The watchmen did not proceed on the duty consigned them by his lordship, of re-conducting Mike and Gertrude back to their abode, without asking "to drink his lordship's health," as may be imagined.

"Ah! you were the fellows I thrashed by mistake the other night, are you not?"

"Ay, ay, my Lord, that we were!" exclaimed both the men at once; "I can shew the bruises still!"

"Ah, I dare say! Well; never mind that the noble "punisher-general," whose "a failing" it was sometimes to lay about him we bludgeon indiscriminately on both the in and the guilty, and then heal the wounds former by a douceur. "Very well, if that case, you may divide this between you," he tinued, giving the men a guinea, and repeat injunction to them not to delay in seeing to mariner and Gertrude home.

Thither they accordingly proceeded, after expressed many acknowledgments to their assistant; though Gertrude's tears spoke ever than all the expressions of gratitude of whi good old mariner disburdened his heart.

Leaving them, then, to proceed on their errand, his lordship betook him home to a his toilette. Meantime, we will invite the at once to accompany us to the then s royalty in its brightest lustre, the abode Prince of Wales at Carlton House.

CHAPTER XIII.

"Twas at the Royal feast—
the hero sate
On his imperial throne,
His valiant peers were placed around,
Their brows with roses and with myrtle bound."
Dayden.

What a singular taste had the fourth George, as to what constituted magnificence!

Fond of show, fond of costliness even to the most extravagant extent, fond of the indulgence of even eastern luxury; yet this magnificent prince, (for so he was) delighted in low-roofed rooms, as the scene of his entertainments and residence. This circumstance is known to every one who remembers Carlton House in times past, or at a later period has examined Buckingham Palace, which was prepared especially to meet his tastes.

In that costly yet low-roofed banqueting room then, called the "golden-room," at Carlton House, the burst of revel awoke; and the so a Sheridan; the cool conceit and self-comple (much more than the dry humour) of a Brust the vivid bursts of eloquent hilarity from the of a Fox; the eccentric remarks of a Harderwards Lord Coleraine; the endlessly flowing anecdote and brilliancy of classical if tion of a Hare; the pithy "knowing" remarks Bullock, of Jockey-Club notoriety; the awaking drollery of a Jekyll,—all contribution pour along the tide of joviality and convivia sure.

A great deal of that chit-chat went on in his Royal Highness more particularly delights in which Hanger, in his eccentric way, ma party laugh aux éclats. More especially wer amused with his well-known story of the din had the honour to give to the Prince, at a when his credit being exhausted, and his guest unexpected too, he "borrowed" a I soles in one quarter, and a leg of mutton other; while Hare exclaimed, "dapes inen After this characteristic narration, and a def by Sheridan of "free and independent" elwhich he declared meant "free to pocket people's money, and to be independent of promises,"-after much chit-chat of this kin conversation happened to turn on the singula cumstances relative to Hatfield, concerning which public interest was much excited at the moment, in consequence of the number of persons of distinction with whom he had been acquainted. In fact, there was not a person present who had not met him in society, while passing under the name of Cappergill as Lord Balderton's private secretary.

"An ingenious knave," said Hare; "and under better auspices would have shone in the council chamber, and exhibited a perfect model for our diplomatists, in the grand point of accomplished rascality!"

"Nay; don't use so plain a term," said Hanger; "the offence here is not in the thing, but the word! See the power of language. Like a prismatic glass, shifted different ways, it exhibits a different colour. Only substitute the word 'ingenuity' for that of 'rascality,' and the term 'diplomatist' for that of 'felon' or 'forger,' and you exhibit a marvellously clever and meritorious fellow instead of an expert rogue!"

"' Language' like ' conscience,' " observed Sheridan, " is too often but the covering that not only conceals deformity, but passes it off for a grace."

"I declare I don't know," said the warm-hearted Fox, "whether to be more interested as a politician (a 'political rogue,' if you please) at the dress of Hatfield, or feel as a man for the deof the charming creature whom her ill-fortunmade his wife. The account the papers gaother day of her flight with him to the coast, bited her devotion for him in a very interlight."

"The story certainly has an interest," obsthe Prince, "that I seldom remember surpand exhibits the romance, whether tender or eprising, of 'real life,' as nothing inferior to creations of fiction. The poor girl was a worthy of a better and more auspicious allians should like much to see her."

"That will not be difficult for your Royal I ness," said here a person, who having doffer bear-skin waistcoat, shaggy surtout and trou and hob-nailed shoes, appeared now (under phase of a civilized costume) something more the rest of mankind in a humanized society. have myself been instrumental," he added, "in course of this evening, in coming up not inop tunely, as it appeared, to her assistance."

"Romance on romance!" said the Presmiling, and with a look of no feigned into Pray do us the favour, my lord, of relating circumstances of this new chapter in the stores the Beauty of Buttermere, of which the w

speaks so much at present—this modern Heloise of our British Meillerie, or Clarens!"

Accordingly, Lord Dromedford related the events of the earlier part of the evening, with which the reader is already acquainted. "And may I be permitted to add," he continued, "my humble and earnest prayer in support of the poor girl's petition for a reprieve for her husband?"

There was a pause for the moment, not less exacted by the claim now made on the feelings of the party, than by the surprise at witnessing the fierce and pugnacious person who had advanced it, the advocate for the exercise of the softer attributes of mercy and humanity. The Prince's feelings were with the noble petitioner, and, it is needless to say, with "the Beauty," whose conduct had excited so much and deserved interest.

"Well," he said, after a pause; "I can safely say that if the minister will acquiesce, the petition is gained. But I fear, not all the interest that has manifested itself in the public in behalf of the young and lovely wife,—to say nothing of that which exists for the clever delinquent, her husband,—will avail in moving the marmorean stubbornness, the iron inflexibility, of Pitt."

"I gave the poor girl to understand, your Royal Highness, that there would be no small difficulty in promoting her suit in that quarter; and consequently recommended her to address her perhaps the most interesting advocate she have with your gracious self, in case my I suit should fail."

" And who was that, pray?"

"The lovely Duchess of Devonshire;" is indeed was the quarter to which Gertrude is solved on addressing herself.

"Ay; want and woe, and helplessness an lected merit, seldom fail to find a friend in A powerful advocate, indeed, is the between Georgiana! I see not how I am to resist the quence of her Grace's eyes, should she coupled for clemency, even before her tongue confirmed their appeal. Well; Pitt me persuaded to give way for once."

So spoke the Prince: the words being use with his usual dignity and grace of manner that true princely character, which was alway cendant, even, in the most familiar condesce of his courtesy.

Scarcely had they escaped the lips of the speaker before the doors flew open and the Duchess herself hurried into the room, wi anxious flush on her cheek, that spoke how we her heart now beat (as, indeed, it did ever) it cause of humanity.

" Pardon, your Royal Highness, this uncer

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nious and ill-beseeming intrusion; but the ear of a prince, as generous and benign as he is just, will, I know, ever willingly lend itself to the plea of clemency! If, then, it is for life I am come to pray your gracious protection, you will forgive my intrusion, and permit me to hope that the petition I present you may not fail in exciting your compassion, and inducing you to accede to its prayer."

"The petition," said the Prince, with a benign smile, as he rose and gracefully extended his hand to the lovely Duchess, "has already been made known to me—is already granted."

"Granted!—then Heaven itself is the advocate with your Royal Highness's bosom, and not the humble mortal who is before you!"

"I have a double gratification in performing an act of clemency, as a man no less than a prince. To know that an application for it is promoted by your Grace, is to know also that its concession is a worthy one."

"My thanks and those of the poor girl be returned you from the fulness of her heart and mine!" and she turned her head aside, to hide the tear that forced its way. A universal plaudit rose through the circle, as all its members now joined in drinking a health, after the convivial fashion of the time, to the warm-hearted and lovely Duchess, the royal host being the first, not only to pledg propose it.

The anxiety that had led this exemplar exalted female to the scene where she had I so interesting a part, was scarcely exceeded h which she now experienced in conveying the intelligence of the success of her suit to Gert

The circumstances of the application made Duchess will be explained forthwith in our er chapter; meantime, while the plaudit was swelling forth that hailed her warmth of hear generosity of disposition, she was fast has down the marble steps, to regain her carriage convey consolation to the anxious and exp

CHAPTER XIV.

"Quelle femme jamais associa comme vous la tendresse et la vertu, et temperant l'une par l'autre les rendit toutes deux plus charmautes."—ROUSSEAU.

AND now to join Mike and Gertrude, in order to trace the progress of that eventful errand on which we left them.

On reaching the outer gate of the court affording an entrance to Devonshire House, an old man was engaged in warm parley with the porter, who, it should seem, had denied him admission, saying that her Grace could not be seen. On his alleging that it was on a matter where life itself was at stake that he requested admittance, he gained little further concession from the Cerberus at the gate, whose one surly reply was—

"My orders are to let no one pass. You can leave what you have to say in the shape of a letter,

and it will come to her Grace's hand, I da when she returns from the ball."

"I would only trespass on her time on ment. If she were to know that the ma come upon is as serious as I have informed am sure she would blame you (kind as the she is) for not giving me admittance."

It was old Mike who spoke, an additional of interest being thrown over his wild and e sive countenance by the eagerness with who combated the surly porter. It was a study painter to mark the wan yet animated train characteristic guise of the old mariner, as his appeared in strong relief, beneath the light huge lamp that hung over the porter's lodge where he stood.

"Hold your peace, old man! There Grace's carriage now at the door, and it we passing immediately," growled the porter, pold Mike aside with his arm, which was not similar in sturdiness to one of the iron-bars of gate which he drew back, as he proceeded to its huge folds open. To the porter's surprise, ever, the carriage did not come forward fro portico, but was driven aside from the door her Grace's intention of going out was adjot for a short time; but, how this might be, we at once proceed to inquire.

The Duchess, then, had been in the act of passing to her carriage from the steps of Devonshire House, in order to go to a ball, when a female ran up to her, and placing a paper in her hand, entreated her Grace to glance over its contents.

"And if," added the female, in a tone of yet more anxious supplication,—"if it should fail to engage your kind attention, or plead sufficiently strongly to your interest, let this 'chain' speak for the unfortunate Gertrude of Buttermere, that she is, at length, compelled to shew it to your Grace, to recall the generous promise you made on giving it her, of exerting your interest in her behalf should she ever be constrained to seek it."

The quick glance of the Duchess rested by turns on the paper, the chain which Gertrude held forward, and the suppliant herself. She at once recognised the chain (which she had formerly worn) and recalled the circumstance and occasion of her having given it to the lovely mountain-maiden on the day of the Derwentwater regatta. In an instant, the ball, the promise she had made to be present at it, the glitter, the pomp of that world of luxury and splendour, where she herself was awaited as its chief attraction and ornament, were all forgotten in the call of humanity.

Accordingly, after some kind words of recognition to Gertrude, and regret for the situation in which she was placed, she hastened out of riage and returned to the drawing-room, to read the contents of the petition.

Gertrude was desired to follow her up and the Duchess having asked her if she has to Devonshire House all alone, she was in of the circumstance of the old mariner's de at the gate.

Orders were instantly given that Mike be permitted to pass. In fact, the Duch membered the scene on the lake in which had been so prominent an actor. The por stopped his progress at the gate in consequence the singularity of his appearance, wondering such a "strange, outlandish-looking being" possibly want up at the house, and mistrusting the assurances he gave of the importance commission.

As for Gertrude, who had first of all adto the gate, he at once admitted her, on a standing she had business at the house, witho further question.

The Duchess having now read the pe said to Gertrude, "You did rightly; I am you applied to me;" and her cheek was fl with that warmth of sincerity which she if behalf of the petitioner, nor less with the ea ness of that benevolent purpose which proher to use her utmost efforts in promoting its success. "I am happy," she repeated, "that you addressed yourself to me. To have applied to any member of the ministry would have been in vain—words wasted—time thrown away. I will speak to the Prince myself,—this instant I will seek out his presence. Live, my dear girl, in hope, and in the assurance that no effort of mine shall be left untried to assist you."

Another moment, and the Duchess was in her carriage, desiring to be driven as fast as possible to Carlton House. With what success she made her application has been already witnessed.

"Heaven is propitious to us!" she exclaimed, as she met Gertrude, on her return to the drawing-room; "your suit is gained; and now you shall be spared the anxiety you must necessarily feel until you are on your way to bear the warrant of pardon. This moment a carriage shall convey you, with an out-rider to expedite your way in the stoppages for changing horses; and your aged friend shall accompany you—this moment! By the time (and she here rang the bell and gave the requisite orders) the carriage is here, the gracious Prince who has granted my request will have commanded the document of reprieve to reach my hands."

The excess of joy that this intelligence occin poor Gertrude's mind, so far overwhelm that she was for some little time insensible,—so, as from a different and more bitter on have witnessed her before. No attention to fellow-creature can shew another was remitthe part of the best of her sex, towards her I sister,—whom she felt to be a sister by that or bond of suffering which links the higher lowest together in the wide league of mortal

Had words been wanting on the part of G to testify her gratitude, yet the effect her pat kindness had produced on her, amply testiff deeply it had been recognised. Acknowleds however, were not wanting on Gertrude's to herself, nor on the part of Mike pre to her recovery. But the Duchess declared a more than sufficiently repaid, in the has she experienced, in having been able to so in her application; and she now urged stant departure of Gertrude, as the carriag announced as ready.

This recommendation was speedily obeyethe fateful paper, which had just arrived, now pressed to her heart, Gertrude, accomby Mike and the courier, or outrider, in proceeded on her eventful journey back

north. The Prince's wish to have seen the Beauty of Buttermere, and which he expressed to Lord Dromedford, was hence not gratified.

As the Duchess saw her depart she exclaimed, "Speed, now!—speed on your way!—the next time I meet Gertrude of Buttermere, when this crisis of bitterness is past, I hope to learn from her that she is rewarded with all the happiness she so much deserves."

The next time!—who can tell what storm of fate shall have fallen on that lovely brow when next the Duchess might see it?—when next she might possibly meet Gertrude? Already, its expression was so much depressed by grief, and the constant harassment of spirit, that she had viewed with surprise the traits that, so late, were as cheerful as they were lovely.

Thought had stamped its wasting impress on them; and apprehension looked fearfully and wildly forth from those eyes, whose vivacity had lately won their ray from the light of happiness and love!

The soft bloom had become yet more languid on the cheek; the tender hues of that saddened charm, if they touched the heart, and persuaded it to love no less than heretofore, asked, too, its regrets for the happy lustre that had erewhile illumined features that shone to awaken feelings of less than admiration.

The languid streak of the autumnal day playing over those fair waters that washed he native village banks, was not sadder the chilled smile, the dimmed delight of those of of hers, where all was drooping, and yet whe was still—how beautiful!

CHAPTER XV.

"One, two! (the bell strikes.)
The hour crawls on!—Once gone,
You cannot now recal your father's peace,
Your own extinguished years of youth and hope,
Nor your dead mother!"

SHELLEY.

The fateful crisis had now arrived, in looking for which the whole shires of Cumberland and Westmoreland had been standing on tiptoe.

All Carlisle, the scene where we now invite the reader, was in a buzz, discussing the singular history of Hatfield—the period being that of the assizes.

"To think," said one, "that after so many more serious charges, he should at length be under sentence for the apparently trivial offence of counterfeiting the direction of a mere letter."

"Oh! it is often the case," replied another,

"that men, being emboldened by impun greater delinquencies, are so far thrown off guard that they are at last entrapped into ruin, through some minor hazard to which had exposed themselves, by the too dang security they had acquired and felt."

"True; but inattention does not appear to been Hatfield's error; though brave and e prising, yet he was on his guard at the tim 'defrauded the Post Office,' (as the charg which he has been condemned is termed.) ness the plans he had previously laid for his cape from the neighbourhood of Keswick, w he put the fatal letter in, franked with Col Renmore's name."

Such indeed was the offence (the detection which the reader remembers) for which he doomed to suffer; for though justice had marsh a dreadful array of delinquencies against him, the present offence having been cognizable Cumberland in particular, as committed in county, was made the subject of arraignment at Carlisle assizes. It was supported by the evide of Colonel Renmore as to the handwriting, and the evidence also of Quandish. Though a comparatively slight, as placed by the side of the greater feats of counterfeit or forgery which been committed by the same hand, yet what the

tered this to justice or law, since they had sufficient crimination on which to demand the sacrifice of his life, as an atonement general for his whole career of hitherto successful fraud. But to direct ourselves again to listen to the conversation of the good folks of Carlisle, as regards the subject of their universal interest, for a moment longer.

"To be sure, it is a sad pity that a man who could bring such a 'mort' o' witnesses to speak in behalf of his superior conduct and behaviour in society, and the many acts of charity and benevolence he has been known to do—I say it is a sad pity that such a man should be in the unfortunate situation he is!"

"Indeed it is! And to make the matter a subject of yet greater regret, he is about to suffer chiefly on the testimony of a witness who has benefited more than any other object of his benevolence!"

"What! that villain Quandish? By heavens! I should like to see that dog hanged on a gallows as high as Mordecai's! His name is not Quandish, after all, it appears, but Simmonds."

"Ay; how the history of that scoundrel all came out during the trial, and the searching crossexamination with which he was ransacked by the young barrister who was counsel for Hatfield! I never heard of a greater scoundrel than that Simmonds in my life. And he is the man the passed for such a saint with the Buttermere Keswick people!"

"His black character was well exposed, as his own forced avowal too, under the severe scr of that young barrister. I never heard any more complete."

"As much to the honour of the young co as to the shame and exposure of the vile "I evidence;" for he was nothing better,—this monds. His acrimony in pursuing Hatfield, has done so many months past, in spite of al benevolence he had previously experienced him, was, after all, merely to save himself in Dublin forgery affair, for which so large a re was offered."

"Nothing else in the world! But let the spy take heed; he may himself be arraigne that charge if he does not take care, unless in stroying Hatfield he has destroyed the testim too, that would condemn him. At present, ifield is much 'more sinned against than sinni as regards, I mean, the circumstance of his be about to suffer in consequence of his betrayathis serpent, who has stung away his life, ihaving been cherished by him!"

So discoursed the "good folks" of Carlisle, such were the feelings with which they regar the subject of their chief and most painful interest, and the base witness brought to condemn him.

The reference made to the benevolence of Hatfield towards Quandish will be understood by the reader, to whom the circumstances of it have already been explained on the occasion of Hatfield's first interview with his pursuer, the pseudopreacher, near the Dissenting Chapel, at Buttermere,

The young counsel who had so much called forth the admiration of the people, by his adroit conduct of the defence of Hatfield, was at once declared destined to rise to the highest honours in his profession. When we say that this prediction has been long ago proved true, we need scarcely particularize him by name. We may possibly yet introduce the reader to him for a short period ere we leave Carlisle. Amongst other charges that existed, though not brought forward against Hatfield,—since one was sufficient for the purpose of making him a sacrifice,—was that of the death of the two officers who had disappeared in their pursuit of him along the crag.

The secret of their fate the reader alone knows, with the exception of Mike and Gertrude; but justice would have been unable to demand vengeance for it, for lack of all evidence on the subject. In fact, when we consider the enormity of

the punishment to which Hatfield was const for so comparatively trivial an offence, it v seem that justice was eager to fasten her wherever she could, in order to recompense h for the constant mockery with which she was in having victims wrested from her through qui of law or deficiency of evidence.

And, now, to leave the busy talking town the confused crowd without, to enter the recof those melancholy walls, where, with suheart, and regret mingled indeed with reprobawe seek the chief actor in the gloomy dram which Carlisle was now the scene.

The coolness and self-possession which characterized Hatfield's manner throughout acquaintance with him, still distinguished under the fearful circumstances of his presituation. Many who had met him in social many who knew the conversational and social tractions he possessed, could not, from feeling mingled curiosity and painful interest, refrain visiting him, in the dreary abode where the wall hours of his ill-fated earthly pilgrimage were has ing to their close.

Golefield, ever feeling and charitable, did meet him without a tear, expressive of the rethat arose on the reflection that one so calculto adorn the walks of life, and render those aro him happy by his cheerfulness and amiability of manner, should stand thus branded under the strong hand of so bitter a destiny. It appeared a wonder, and a contradiction, the most melancholy of all which life and its distresses so widely exhibit, that one apparently possessed of so many social virtues should be thus stigmatized with the ignominious sentence due to the blackest guilt—the doom of death!

Hatfield was sensible of the kindness of the benign bard and philosopher towards him, and pressed in return the hand that did not disdain to clasp that of a criminal even such as himself, if by this testimony of kindness any consolation could be afforded the sufferer.

"Why, really," said Hatfield, calmly smiling, "the terrors with which men invest death through the artificial associations of custom, no less needlessly indeed than considerably, augment our alarm. The solemn bell that shall knoll forth my passage to suffer the last penalty—what is it, but a mere sound, after all, if rightly considered; and which wakes idly on the ear, were it not for the artificial associations connected with it? Half the terrors a death such as mine possesses do but exist in the solemn forms in which Custom arrays it. The pomp of gloomy ceremonial is but vain and harmless to a philosophic mind, or a mind that

can abstract itself from the usances of earth artificial life, and view things more essential regards their real nature. Death itself is a whose terror exists more in the ideas Conventataches to it than in itself! The 'ceasi exist' (which it is) is as natural as the 'birt existence;' and therefore ought not to sensations more formidable! For why sho do so?—since we must die,—since decay, or tion, death (as it is termed), are inevitable, thing itself then being unworthily an obj dread, much less so should the artificial terror solemn trappings in which Convention has dit, disquiet or alarm us."

"Socrates himself," replied Golefield, with the philosophic calm of the condemned "could not have delivered himself with g fortitude or elevation of thought when unde demnation. Indeed, it is very true that we for ourselves many of the sources of our alregards the subject of death. That which and subdues a vulgar mind is deservedly regarded, because better understood, by a exalted spirit. A great mind, for example smile within itself at the hubbub and cry of it tance raised about a thing in itself so insigni as the extinction of breath in a pigmy earth such as individual man. Why! in the important of the subject of the condemnation o

system of the universe, where worlds throng on countless worlds, the extinction of one earth-ball or star-world from amid the myriads around, above, and below, what would it be? It would not be missed;—and yet how mighty a matter do we, the insects on this one earth-ball, this speck itself of a world, deem it, if the slight and pigmy tenure of our existence is broken and at an end!"

And the philosophic bard smiled solemnly, as he gazed in his mind's eye on the dream of worlds and worlds that shone through the kaleidoscope of his fancy, while he, amidst all the vast glory of that dream, knew and saw himself the "pigmy speck" he had just described.

After a pause, Hatfield proceeded, his feelings being now called from himself to others, as he said—

"Yes; I can, as far as my own feelings are concerned, meet my fate without much emotion. However unnecessarily severe I may consider the laws by which I suffer, I do not yet bear any ill-will to society by whose verdict I am condemned. Society I always courted, and I think won the esteem of——"

" Assuredly! assuredly!"

"I cannot but blame myself for contravening its laws. Enough of that. Be it my misfortune, or destiny, or infatuation, or, if you will, my and not merely the constraint of circumstance has placed me in the predicament in which I I will not dwell on a topic that it were used discuss. No; it is not for myself I feel p being thus wrested from life; but for other her—for Gert——"

And his words were here checked by the tion that overcame him, and which, for some he found it difficult to subdue. Some be words escaped him—

"Say for me all that—say whatever can or fortify, or heal her spirit,—say, too, all th gratitude of a man and a husband can—"

Little did he or Golefield know the of this noble-spirited and constant wife was, an been, making for his reprieve! No hope been held out to him by the judge that sent him.

Golefield pressed the unhappy man's har token of encouragement and assurance the would express everything that was asked of He was about to address some reply when door of the cell was opened, and it was connicated by one of the authorities of the prison as the hour was now drawing near when its in would be summoned away never to return

curate of Lorton was waiting without, in order to offer any consolation that his sacred admonitions might impart.

"The curate of Lorton!—Fenton!" hastily exclaimed Hatfield, with yet increased anguish and emotion, as he started from the rugged seat which his cell enumerated in its grim furniture. "No, no!—not Mr. Fenton!—I cannot—I must not see him! Any other gentleman of his sacred brother-hood."

"Nay, nay," said Golefield, in a tone of gentle remonstrance, or rather persuasion; "why not see Mr. Fenton?—the mildest, the most considerate, the best of men and spiritual pastors."

" I must not !- I dare not !"

"But why should you exhibit such disinclination to see so good a man?" asked Golefield, surprised at the agitation of mind which the thought of seeing Fenton in particular occasioned him. "Should anything dwell morbidly on the spirit, the curate of Lorton, of all other persons, might know the secret of relieving it, by the bland spiritual medicine he is so well able to impart."

"So good a man, did you say?" replied Hatfield; "it is for this very reason I would not be selfish enough to shock him by shewing him how bad an one nature has given birth to in myself!" " Let me persuade you-"

"I must not!" rejoined, hastily, the man, hesitating, and evidently under an struggle of feeling; "I dare not! I—I—see him!"

"Why should you express yourself thus st. Why are you afraid to see him?"

"Afraid! Alas! and yet he may be even more at seeing me," said. Hatfield, in ered tone, and with an expression of de morse.

"Have you injured him in any way?

"Injured him? If I have injured him, I injure him yet more were I to see him."

Golefield was silent in surprise and sor conjecture, as to the purport of Hatfield's while he himself was silent too, and wrap deep no less than painful consideration, as a resolve he knew not whether to follow or At length, he suddenly exclaimed, as if raised his spirit to an effort that required energies to sustain—

"Well; I will see him! Though I wou that anguish—that harm—should assail him i sequence of all that may pass between us; have now a bitter curiosity—a fatal desire to the disclosure—to own . . . no more! no Give him admittance, dear Sir,-request him to join me."

And here he took an affectionate leave of the benign person, of whose kindness he had been more particularly sensible than of any that had been manifested by any other person, among all those who had expressed their deep regret at his situation.

The gentle-hearted bard was too much overpowered to reply to-the expressions of grateful acknowledgment uttered by the condemned man, and so took his departure, with full heart and sincere regret, in order to leave him alone with the Curate of Lorton, who was now awaited by him in his cell.

He sate with his head sunk down between his clasped hands, under the influence of some violent struggle of feeling. So completely was his spirit wrapped up in it, that he did not perceive that Fenton had entered the cell and stood beside him. He started up and fixed a wild and intent gaze on the countenance of the good and reverend man.

Fenton was the first to speak, and addressed him with his usual blandness; but he did not, or could not, answer. At last, the conflict of feeling that was struggling in his bosom could no longer repress itself, as it found vent in an agony of tears, while the exclamation broke from his lips"O God! to think we should meet after long, long bitter years of severance—as thus!"

Fenton, never having been acquainted knowledge, at least) with the unhappy ms viously to the occasion of the luckless man Lorton, was surprised at hearing these wor mildly replied, that he should indeed hav happy could their meeting have been man less melancholy circumstances. At the sam he could not call to mind that he had even the person he addressed, at any such person distance of time as he seemed to imply. Curate then begged the prisoner to be contained and composed.

"Yet I cannot wonder," he added, humane feelings dictated, "at this access of a in a naturally generous and sensitive spirit, I trust you possess, from many estimable have heard of your disposition, however mist or necessity may have banefully exercised its ence in thwarting your better natural inclina This burst of grief will ease your surcharged Let it have its way—it is acceptable in the sense of the s

The good man paused, as the prisoner, vouring to surmount his anguish, replied, w condemned himself, in much bitterness of remorse, apparently—

"No; you are too forbearing and kind, thus to impute anything naturally good to me! I at an early age forfeited the esteem of the best of parents, and left them, in my heartlessness, to anguish and remorse. Had you ever—a son? Did he ever by his heartless conduct occasion the death of the tenderest of mothers? and leave his father to inconsolable hours of grief, which hard circumstances had rendered galling enough before? Had you ever, I ask, a son?"

Fenton gazed with breathless and painful interest on the face before him, lost in surprise as to the means by which the unhappy man could know so much of his family distresses.

"I had," he said, in a tone in which fear and regret were mingled: "I had, indeed, a son!"

"You had? Would you own him as such in the hour of shame, of death, should he fling himself on your bosom and pray to you for forgiveness, as—as—I do now?"

And saying this, Hatfield (whose real name now, at length, painfully discloses itself) fell in all the passion of mingled grief and affection upon the bosom of Fenton, who stood statue-like, with his hand raised to his venerable brow, sprent with grey thin hairs, while he turned aside his vain endeavouring to check the tears the each other down his withered cheek.

After a lengthened pause, in which both and son were maintaining a bitter struggle of Fenton was the first to break the silence raised up his ill-fated son, who now sto downcast brow before him.

"Is it thus, then, I have found you!"
gazed on his countenance with remorse me reproach. "Your mother's look speaks to pleads to me for you, in your brow!—that whom you——"

"Murdered!—forgive me!—oh! if you of give me! But how can you, when I cannot myself? Oh! bitter as just accusation! Druin her peace of mind, her health, her life heartless abandonment of your roof? The is worse than a thousand deaths as ignoming that I am doomed to suffer! No; you can give so base a son! especially when he comes you denounced by the laws of his country was, before, by those of Heaven!"

"The meeting is indeed bitter," said t man, and his voice failed.

"I had wished to have been spared it; bu forced to encounter it. I had wished to

suffered you to remain in the comparatively happy belief that I had long ago been swept (as soon I shall be, and with shame!) from existence. Yes: I had wished to have spared you this additional pang-this additional proof that I was born as your curse! From my cradle, it seems, I was doomed to be a source of pain to you, and to her who mourned for me till she sunk in death. Snatched from you while yet an infant, I was but restored to you and her to occasion you an augmented cause of grief at a more advanced age. Heavens! I have been inclined at times to think with one who remembers my early tale,"-and he referred to old Mike as he spoke this :- "that I have been the slave and toy of some dark decree of fate,-at times, I say, I have thought thus, and blamed myself less; but, then, when I recurred to the bitter circumstance of my mother's death, which I learned some time after my abandonment of home,-I again reproached myself in all the bitterness of grief and compunction. Yes; this bitter disclosure of myself I had wished to spare you-and the pain it carries with it! Witness, Heaven! how often has my heart yearned inwardly towards you, when I knew you were in the neighbourhood where I had been staying !-how my footsteps bent (whether I would or no) towards your dwelling, and have led me past

your gate, longing, but not daring to intinauspicious presence. I was withheld fro so,—I knew the brand of legal denuncia upon me,—I thought, 'I will spare my fa trial at least!' but Heaven has willed the bitter history should be laid before you. Heaven! what tears have I shed over my memory, in secret, silent hours of anguish turing self-reproach! And when you were recalling the name of your luckless so you deemed dead, with blame, yet comp he was offering up prayers for your peace, forgiveness from his mother's spirit and Heaven." After a pause he continued—

"What would I have given to have your door and thrown myself at your fee hand has been on the latch—has tremble fallen from it. But on the one occasion length that latch was raised, how all the compainfully that ever! But yet I dared not the disclosure. As I sate opposite you, and regarded me fixedly, I thought, in spite change time has made in these features, you have recognised me! I turned my brow a but oh! how my heart beat under the strught which it was conscious—how it beat—when

saw you enter the room! I longed to raise my voice to cry out, with the prodigal son, 'Father, forgive me! though I am no longer worthy to be called your son!' How did I long to hasten up to you, to fling myself at your feet, and make myself known to you!"

"And you should have been received as the hapless prodigal of the blessed book was by his father! Yes; though a criminal,—though a witness of disgrace and source of woe to me,—I will forget it all in the thought you are yet—" his voice failed as he added, "her son!"

He was able to articulate no more; words were no longer available to express the anguish—yet the pleading of affection—that agitated his spirit.

Willingly would we draw a veil over the suffering of the father, even as the painter of old veiled the brow of Agamemnon over his daughter's sacrifice! Bitter was the account between the sire and the son!—bitter the effort of mutual consolation; for the parent was now, perhaps, in more need of it than the son!

The agonizing disclosure, the thought of which we have witnessed throughout our pages as having wrought such anguish to the son, had now been made. But to heal the wound it inflicted on the bosom of Fenton . . . there was but one dread

remedy that could ever assuage such a tion!

But hark! they come!—the mournfuters of death's last scene,—their footsteps is hollow echoes along the passage that lead cell. Chill fell they on the heart of him to suffer, but not more chill than on the the convulsed and sinking parent. Not on own account, but much—oh! much more of his venerable sire, did the condemned call up all his native fortitude of soul, stren yet more by the hallowed energies of fection.

"Dear father!" he said, as the old me together with himself, to be in readiness the melancholy train that was soon to excell,—"dear father, you must not attend entreat you, forbear such a trial! Your pat this awful moment unnerves me! I can death firmly as far as I am myself concern the suffering I am sensible of for you, I can more than I can bear without being shaken treat you, stay away!"

"Impossible! my presence is required dispensable! This bitter secret that he imparted to me,—that has discovered in ye to me,—has not been made known yet to the There is no one of my clerical brethren on the spot to perform the last sad duties on this occasion, and the public requires therefore the presence of the only one at hand, which is myself! Even were it permitted me to withdraw from this bitter trial, I feel I could not! No, my son! I will accompany you to the——"

"Scaffold!—ay, such is my dark destiny—the judgment (I must deem it) that has fallen on my head, for the death of that dear parent—"

But if concern and anguish wrung the heart of the son at the thought of the parent he had lost, they were scarcely less keenly awakened for the parent also that he now pressed to his heart, in the farewell they snatched ere "the satellites of doom" should arrive. A more deadly paleness had bespread that venerable brow and furrowed cheek. Nature flagged, and life indeed seemed nearly extinct within him, from the effect of the violent internal struggle that had convulsed him beyond the power of rallying or restoration. The arm of his ill-fated son supported his tottering frame, as the old man's lips moved as though in the attempt to speak, while the power of utterance was denied.

At this moment the cell door opened; the melancholy train presented itself; and the warning summons of the bell proclaimed to the partners (we may indeed call them) in s whither it was that they were now called

Brief as precipitate was the way they was to death! but vast and enduring track that stretched beyond it—it was the of Eternity!

CHAPTER XVI.

"Ha! 'tis the blood
Which fed these veins that ebbs till all is cold;
It is the form that moulded mine that sinks
Into the white and yellow spasms of death!

Woe to the wrong'd and the avenger! Woe
To the destroyer—woe to the destroy'd!
Woe both to those that suffer and inflict!"

SHELLEY.

There was a din in the wide square of Carlisle—the din of manifold voices,—the buz of the restless crowd that now awaited the appearance of the fatal procession, and gazed anxiously towards the scaffold. Some, indeed, of that gazing throng strained it on the tiptoe of mere idle curiosity; but the greater number looked on with breathless and painful interest. Few, very few, were able to entertain those sentiments of solemn satisfaction inspired by the feeling that the spirit of injured Justice was being appeased; since the penalty on the present vol. III.

occasion was considered so disproportion severity to the nature of the peculiar of which vengeance was sought.

Remarks of this nature were freely m by various persons; amongst others, by barrister, who was one of the crowd, and been already specified as having won so m plause by his clever management of the for the unhappy victim.

"Justice, indeed! justice!" he reiterated characteristic, and, in the present instance priate tone of sarcasm, (the reader will, w not, recognise the speaker)—" May I liv the day when such justice as this may be as it deserves to be!—when the foul libel now on its real name may be for ever sile shame! Justice, forsooth! did ever injut foully disfigure any legal code?"

"Come, come; these words are too bit worthy young orator!" said a sleek-faced, and somewhat corpulent person, in a bushy wig, whose lip quivered with suppresses while his countenance wore an aspect of a demureness. "Here, in a breath almost, y demn those two great authorities of the er the Bank and the Government;—for the lat only conciliated the former in making capital!" Young man! young man! the lat

be venerated! One of your years is by no means competent to speak of the expediency of enactments that have been sanctioned by wiser heads than your own."

"Wiser heads!" interrupted the young barrister, impatiently, as he cast a hasty glance on the demure supporter of "legal murder," and as quickly turned away from him in disgust. He fancied, by-the-bye, that he had seen a countenance that somewhat resembled that of his opponent, though he could not recall the precise occasion on which he had witnessed it.

"Ay; wiser heads than yours, young man, have deliberated on the justice of the sentence now about to be put in execution; and let me suggest, you have no right to arraign the award of the law!"

"Such is the strain of servile, paltry cant, and narrow, hoodwinked prejudice; such is the strain of a grovelling spirit, and one confederated in the base league of upholding abuses!" replied the young barrister, with that characteristic acrimony which afterwards rendered him so formidable an antagonist in argument, both forensic and parliamentary. "May I live, however, to see the day—" he proceeded, with the same characteristic fervour, and that eloquence of wrong into which the "indignant spirit warmed him," as Juvenal says of his own

verse,—" may I live to see the day when about to be perpetrated may be denounce 'legal murder!"

" Young man! young man!---"

"I will speak!" he continued, like H
"Yes; when those who are the upholders,
stigators, of so flagrant a dispensation si
pulled down from their high estate, and held
merited scorn and execution!"

The demure upholder of old abuses and enormities shrunk back confounded before withering look of scorn, and the indignant eloquence, with which he was encountered. spirit of "cant," however assured a counter it may for a time bear, is seldom able to itself up long before the true and fervent land of the heart, exercised for its discomfiture. ascendancy of Truth makes itself at last fell wrings a conviction from its shrinking antagof his own littleness and conscious shame.

The spark of feeling that shone forth i young orator and future statesman was not w kindling a similar warmth in the breast of on stood near; but his milder tone and gentler of sition expressed itself in a different way, observed to the other—

" Indeed, I feel with you, that the present

sion exhibits a melancholy perversion of that which the decrees of Mercy and Wisdom (not human laws) pronounce to be Justice."

This person was Golefield, who in his passage from the cell had found his way so much impeded by the people in front of the prison, that he was obliged to remain in the crowd, although he would gladly have withdrawn and avoided witnessing the melancholy spectacle now briefly to be presented. He spoke as a philosopher,—the person he addressed spoke as a politician. They each viewed the same subject with equal condemnation; the one, with the regret rather of a sage; the other, with more of the abhorrence of an ardent political combatant.

The philosopher proceeded (for the brief period now allowed him) in his peculiar vein—

"And melancholy, too, is it to see, on looking round ('theorising,' as the Greeks say) over this wide arena, this sea of human heads,—heart-rending is it to see the callous indifference of many, and the vain curiosity of some, to witness the spectacle, and not derive benefit from the lesson. Look at those simple rustic throngs; look at those mothers there, leaving their domestic duties, and hurrying with their infants in their arms, when they had better have stayed at home. Why do they come? merely to gratify idle curiosity?"

The lawyer curled up his lip, and said hastily-

"Ay, ay! true, true! but I view the ma a different light, and with more exasperated for than you do, good Mr. Golefield. And—"

But here the colloquy was interrupted I entry of the fatal procession on the platfo death, whither now the attention of the pall anxious crowd was directed.

Yes; that grim stage now presented the in the mournful drama, where "terror and indeed swayed the audience, and death w catastrophe. The pomp of Doom was What man in those closely packed numbers not the beating of his own heart, in the dead sthat reigned around? All eyes are turned chief actor in that fearful drama,—by whose one whom all hearts recognise with feelings of gled awe and affection—the curate of Lorton

Wherefore is it that the current of interemotion, is for an interval suddenly diverted
its primary course? On whose form upon
grim platform do the eyes of the multitude
turn them for awhile from the principal act
it? A murmur of inquiry confusedly
through that crowd, swelling by degrees loude
louder, as those lately hushed beings found
the tongue whose use had been denied ther
benumbed as it was in the chill of awe.

The remark went rapidly from one to the otl

"See! the good Mr. Fenton is ill! What illness is it that has seized the good curate?"—and anon the exclamation of surprise arises—"Oh! see, he falls back!"

"Yes; and the prisoner has caught him in his arms," was the rejoinder, "and clasps him to his heart!"

"What can this mean?" was the universal question arising from these various remarks.

The priest had come forward, according to the duty of his office, to administer the last dread consolation to the victim; but his voice had faltered as he endeavoured to give utterance to the sacred words; nor less had his step, too, wavered as he faced, side by side with that victim on the platform, the assembled people. He faced them, indeed, but all was indistinctness to his gaze, which grew more and more dim, while that maze of forms swam before him as so many shadowy "phatasmata" that rise and fade past. The spirit was dying within him. The prisoner grasped his hand and spoke to him words of affection and support. It was in vain; the effort to rally the sinking spirit was ineffectual :- a moment, and another-and Fenton, the good Fenton, was dead.

The anxiety, the bitter interest, the affectionate and earnest attention, evinced by the prisoner towards the good old man affected as well as amazed all. The usual order of circumstant occasions such as the present was here re They witnessed in the prisoner the personent himself administered, rather than received, a spiritual succour. There arose a universal of compassionate admiration and surprise to the wide throng. Rude were their words in but they spoke from the heart.

"It is a shame," they cried, "he should "What is the meaning," asked others this?" in addition to their cry of "Save him!—this conduct makes him worthy saved!"

They were mute, as the prisoner, while held the form of his dead parent in his arm dressed a word in answer to their inquiries, a acknowledgment of their feeling and kind towards him.

"No, my friends, let me die !—let me die said; "let me die with the best of parents, an whom (with the bitterest remorse) I am comof having injured! Were I not about to death at the hands of the law, I should merit my conduct towards him. I should grieve to after I had lost him! I had wished to have a his name from the blot that must sully it in I known as connected with mine, (or with that rounder which I was disguised.) but the bitter

cumstance that you have just witnessed has rendered this unavoidable. You are amazed, my friends and fellow-countrymen. But a culprit stands before you, condemned not more by the award of the law of the land, than by his own conscience, for the wrong committed towards so beloved, so cherished a man, so indulgent a parent. What is my contrition (deep and bitter as it is,) now available?"

"His affection, his contrition, repairs his fault!" cried out many of the crowd. "Let us hear what he did," cried others—"what was the wrong he speaks of?"

The prisoner proceeded briefly to satisfy the demands of their curiosity, by stating how his mother's life had been probably shortened by her grief, at his early abandonment of the home which was so much embittered by this circumstance. Ill indeed had her indulgence been repaid by her only offspring; and this avowal for a moment suspended the feelings of the crowd in his favour; but their transient condemnation of him was obliterated by the great argument to their feelings that existed in his generous and touching condemnation of himself. Coupled with this also was the remorseful and affectionate conduct he had manifested towards the parent, whose form, cold in death, he yet clasped to his heart, and which created such a tide

of compassionate zeal in his behalf that the lace was carried away by it.

And now the cry of "Save him!" had a pitch that was uncontrollable. A rush was to be made towards the platform in order this rescue, for the cry of "Save him" was I and the same with "Rescue him."

All that mighty crowd rose as with one ment, animated, too, as it was by one impulse it had scarcely sprang forward to pursue its than the fatal knell had sounded the hour was the first to the victim of that Eternity now spread before him.

The stern decree of justice was unalterable avoidable. The object of their sympathy was instant past all need, as he was beyond all of their aid.

The torrent of the crowd which had rushe ward, now fell back, suddenly checked; but it is bable that, having been once set affoat thus mently, nothing less would have satisfied its ditent at being thus frustrated in its original of than by venting its wrath in demolishing the folding, and punishing the luckless ministrarijustice and awarders of a doom that had disg them. But their attention was suddenly divert another direction; and every brow was to away from the scene of its late painful survey.

the opposite side of the square. A female form there made itself apparent, hurrying, as a Moenad of old, with streaming hair and wildness in her looks; while a female voice, too, shrieked aloud, in a voice of anguish, accents that a moment sooner would have awakened gladness in all hearts,—but now saddened them as much in regret and disappointment:—those accents syllabled "Reprieve!"

The accents escaped indeed her lips; but her eyes, as they turned to the spot whither she hurried, told her they were uttered—too late! She gazed fixedly for one brief instant on the bitter spectacle—it was to her, hopelessness! And after uttering one or two incoherent cries, she sank, as though life were in herself, too, extinct, at the foot of the scaffold, which her unhappy destiny, and that of its victim no less, had forbidden her to reach earlier with the scroll of rescue!

The crowd thronged eagerly round her;—all recognised her—all felt for her, and with her! All were acquainted with the singular no less than unhappy circumstances in which she had been involved, as connected with him she had sought to save. The tale of her flight with him had been in the mouths of all, and had elicited the sensations, warm, tender, and approving, that were due to a devotion such as hers. But when it was understood what had been the last unfortunate effort of

that devotion,—as the ill-fated document was up where it had fallen from her hand where sank,—those sensations were felt yet more to no less than bitterly.

There was not a tongue that did not exp commiseration,—there was not a heart to not glow over the recital of all she had dan suffered in behalf of him who was one with and the more it felt sensible of the beauty than exaltedness of her conduct, the more heart softened to feel her present suffering it

The cause of Gertrude,—her anguis chill of disappointment,—was that of eve around.

"Unhappy girl!" said one, who had rais head gently up from the ground, and bent of as he supported her; "hard, hard is the lot sendured, and still endures!" It was Go Little did he expect such a remark as the follow

"If she suffers, she has herself to thank! must take the consequences!"

"Is it possible there is one in this crowd, of himself a man and a Christian, who does no with her?" exclaimed the benign bard, looked up with indignation mingled with gr see who it could be that seemed so little to pathise in the general feeling in behalf of Ger

Nor was he the only one that felt indigm

the young "counsellor" (as those who knew him in the crowd termed him) also turned round, and exclaimed, as he looked at him with scorn—

"Oh! I am not surprised at such a sentiment from you! You are the gentleman, I think, that expressed such conscientious approbation of the 'legal butchery' we have just witnessed! Indeed, you are admirably consistent in evincing your present superiority to all feelings of compassion!"

In fact, it was the apostle of abuse, and prejudice, and hypocrisy, who now met the merited sneer of the young barrister, and on whom he had inflicted the castigation of his sarcasm some little time before, and ere the melancholy tragedy of the day had been enacted. Golefield, in more gentle strain, continued his rebuke—

"Herself to thank, say you? I envy not such a sentiment from one calling himself a man! At the same time," he added, ironically, "I am not surprised at a conscientiousness so admirable—to judge by your late approbation of all we have witnessed this day! A little charity, however, would have been better bestowed in the present instance. There is no one can contemplate the noble affection of this exemplary and unhappy girl without admiring her fortitude and love, and lamenting they should have met with so ill a reward!"

But here his words were interrupted by an old

man, for whom the crowd had made way, now, having his attention called to the coordinated of the crow searched him with a look at once score scrutinizing—

"What! know you not, my friends, we person is that shews himself so worthy a reof a community of men and Christians is hands on him, my friends," he continued dressing himself to the angry and indignant lace, "and examine him a little; and it is to me if you do not find under that demure of the disguised person of one of the blackest human race,—the man who 'swore away' of him who has just suffered on yonder scal the author of all the joint miseries you now do for that victim and yonder unhappy girl what! — he would slink away! Lay has him, my friends, if only to ascertain if the wold Mike be right or no!"

It was indeed the old mariner himsel spoke. He had been distanced by Gertra their entry into the melancholy arena, who crowd thronged before the fatal platform, had followed her steps as she sprang forwar hastened onwards with the document of republic the crowd having closed in upon the whad taken, the old man's progress was impediately

On his having now come up to the spot where Golefield supported her, he, after a very trifling scrutiny, detected the person of Quandish, or Simmonds,—to use his real name,—under the disguise he wore.

The hint afforded by the old mariner to the populace was not lost on them, as may readily be imagined. They seized him, as he was trying to make good his escape. Under their stringent scrutiny, the instruments of disguise—the bushy wig, the broad-brimmed hat, the upper garments—were all torn away, and exhibited the veritable features of the Judas who had betrayed and brought to the scaffold his former benefactor.

"I thought I remembered having seen that interesting countenance before!" exclaimed sar-castically the young barrister, with a scornful smile. "I may, however, be excused for not acknowledging a former acquaintance when he appeared in a shape so little cognizable. My friends, now we have found him, let us make much of him!" he continued, turning to the populace, with his characteristic sarcasm; "and, by all means, let him be well lodged and taken care of—you know where,—the cage makes a very convenient place to put up at in certain cases, and with the constables for lackeys!"

In fact, the young barrister very properly spoke

with the view to at once having Quandish in order that he should be taken before trate, and committed for those heavy of which, as regards his former commerce late victim, he was yet amenable.

But the people, or mob, if you please, winclined to proceed on so leisurely a commould be content alone with taking the their own hands. Their exasperation, knew no bounds, when they discovered that person before them they saw the chief inst of the doom of that victim in whose behas sympathies had lately been so strongly. To wreak their vengeance, then, on his to was but a sort of atonement due to him, considered, besides being a vent for that of feeling in his behalf which had been checked in its course.

"What! is he the man that made such posure of his own villany in the court?" one.

"Away with him," cried another, " to the tarn!" while a rush was made from the to execute some deed of vengeance on the way Judas.

"Treat him gently,—treat him gentl friends!" uttered a sarcastic voice: it was the young barrister, who, after having taken of Golefield, and expressed his hope of Gertrude's recovery, followed the crowd to the outskirts of the town. He left Carlisle that day, to pursue his way on the circuit and to renown. So here we bid him farewell.

And now to return to Quandish. Well would it have been for him had he been content with having brought down doom on his late enemy by his testimony against him, nor had further sought to glut his savage and rancorous nature by lurking before the scaffold, to witness the execution of that doom! However, (as the young barrister had a short time since remarked,) this trait in his character was but consistent with all its other malignant attributes. Bitterly did he suffer for this rash gratification of a malice against his late adversary, and which he carried even beyond the grave—the grave to which he himself had brought him.

Amidst the taunts and execrations of the mob, he was hurried away from the square, afraid on his own part to call in the interposition of the police, since it might be the means of consigning him to the justice from which he had such strong reasons for shrinking. To leave him, then, to their tender mercies, and merely to state that they did not desist from assailing him until they left him for dead by a lonely tarn-side amongst the mountains,—we shall return to the spot where Golefield was now,

dear thing, she will forget it not to see her thus laid low and subeautiful, kind-hearted creature man turned his head aside and "I have seen many a bitter shut never one that touched muthis."

And so saying, the old marine her into a litter which had bee to convey her softly to some a where she could be properly it was deemed expedient to a home.

"Bear her gently, my friend as he followed the litter. "I were here; I shall write to a condition in which her lovely ch question not, blame herself for ev her daughter with sentiments wonder that poor Gertrude, who had more discernment as to his character than herself, regarded him with the disgust he alone merited. Unhappy girl! hers has been a bitter doom. Bear her gently, my friends, this way. How her beauty is wronged by this outrage—how dimmed!"

So saying, Golefield, adding his regrets to those of the good old mariner, followed the train that conducted to its spot of destination—and accompanied with their sympathies—the bowed lily—the scattered gem—the blighted "Beauty" of Buttermere.

ADVENTURES OF

CHAPTER XVII.

"Why, let the stricken deer go weep,
The hart ungalled play;
For some must watch while some must wee
So runs the world away."
SHAKSPE

SHAKSPE

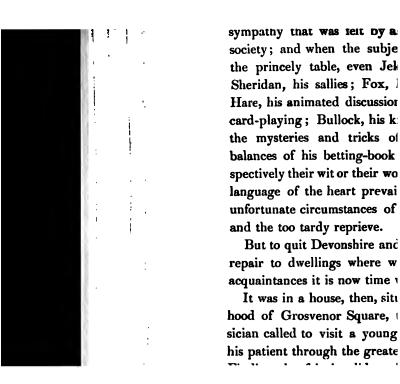
beforehand with it on the way, she was deeply and painfully affected.

"Poor girl! it would be a melancholy pleasure to me to see her once again, and express my sincere condolence with her, that all my efforts in behalf of her unhappy husband should have been destined by Heaven to be unavailing."

So spoke this estimable lady, who, though amongst the high-born dames and princesses of earth, forgot the pride of the palace, to shed a tear—a feeling tear—for the sufferings of a humble sister; and whose truest nobility was the high-mindedness that glows in the generous self-approval that is conscious of doing good, and assuaging the pangs of suffering humanity.

The wish she had expressed, of once again seeing the luckless maiden of Buttermere, was no vain or fleeting "breath;" and she looked forward at no very distant day to shaping her course once again to the mountain-region where this lovely flower drooped beneath the storm of her ill destinies—a storm, indeed, not less fierce than any that gathered over her native crags of Melbreak, Skiddaw, or Helvellyn.

Nor was the beautiful and generous Duchess the only one that felt for the bitter circumstances of which the storm-bowed flower of Buttermere was the victim. When her next visit was



his leave, when her father, who had just entered the drawing-room, inquired, ere the celebrated Galen retreated down stairs—

- "And you don't think it will hurt her to go out, then, to Lady Balderton's this evening?"
 - " Not at all; if she feels an inclination."
- "And as to diet; I presume she may have one glass of wine?"
 - " Certainly! certainly!"
- "And you will allow, perhaps, a little change in her diet?—she is getting rather tired of fricasseed chicken and beef-tea every day."
- "By all means!" said this "comforting" and accommodating disciple of Hippocrates; "she can have any little thing she likes. Her liking it, whatever it may be, will be no small proof to me that it agrees with her!"
- "I suppose she may not venture on ice, or one half-glass of champagne?"
- "By all means! by all means! If it is agreeable to her, it cannot be prejudicial."
- "The opera would be too fatiguing for her to encounter, would it not, just yet?"
- "Not at all; if she likes it, and it amuses her. If it amuses her mind, it will do her system good, and improve also her bodily health, as a consequence; the mind and the corporeal qualities act reciprocally on each other. Hitherto we have

been restoring health and tone of spirits gorating the frame; and who can say 'system' has not been beneficial? By a then, our fair patient can go out to Lady ton's, if she pleases,—yes, and not deny he opera, ice, champagne—whatever she fee clination for!"

So saying, the physician took his leave think it will be almost needless for us to since the reader will have recognised him characteristic "spirit of accommodation, was no other than our worthy friend, Esdaile.

We remember the circumstance of his been summoned from his former place of a the region of his favourite char-floods, to a his valuable advice, a noble invalid in I So agreeable to this noble patient was the treatment adopted by Doctor Esdaile, that less out of sheer gratitude, he spread the of his medical adviser, and recommend throughout the wide circle of his distinguis influential acquaintance. The result was, a good friend the Doctor and his "system" quite the rage. Invalids found they co have any treatment so agreeable as that "accommodating" no less than "philophysician.

The principle of adapting his treatment as much to the tastes of his patients as circumstances would permit, was at once as pleasant a plan for the patient as it was a prudent "system" for the physician. His practice increased immensely; so that it determined him on fixing his abode in town,since wealth was being heaped up every day, and honour was in expectancy. The Code de santé whose golden maxims we have afforded the reader in an earlier portion of our story, had become so fashionable as a "manual of health," that it had actually found its way within the precincts of the royal palace; and in his dreams, the happy physician would see the image of a certain "sanguine-dyed hand" beckoning him away to meet the guerdons which honour had in store for him. In other words, he looked confidently forward to being made a baronet.

Thus, who could be happier or more successful than himself?—and, let us add, as a tribute to his worthy character, to whose success are we more glad to bear witness?

If there was one thing he regretted amidst all this transport of success, it was, that his hand would be getting every day more and more out of practice in "throwing a fly!" But what of that? There must be some little hindrances in all things to the complete fulness of human satisfaction. And



ton, the lady, in fact, he had valescent; but on herself an up to town for the "season, to apply again for the advic friend Doctor Esdaile, to co of the fair patient's health. they than surprised to fin friend now become "a great had always been considered

as a medical adviser, as he humoured as a man, yet lit finding him with "growin

upon him."

Such, however, was the r commended amongst the fi sufficient to induce everyboo to a kitchen, or up to an no one could cure him so we

in fact, it was whispered by those who knew the parties, that the interest that our friend Esdaile has been witnessed as feeling with regard to the heiress of Blacktarn was likely to be at length avowed by an offer of his hand.

But this was at present but an "on-dit," and it must remain for a little while longer uncertain how far such report was justifiable or not. We will not anticipate the conclusion further than to observe that Mr. Lawton felt very warmly the kindness and attention his "old friend Esdaile" had shewn his daughter throughout her indisposition; and the fair Laura herself, too, would acknowledge that she felt fully sensible of his extreme attention.

If this avowal does not wear the complexion of "encouragement" of addresses, we do not know what does! But to follow the steps, or rather carriage wheels, of our physician, to the next patient whom he went to see in the round of his sanatory visitation.

This patient was no other than Mr. Howbiggen, who had been rapidly "breaking up" of late; and, in fact, our philosophical physician, in going to visit him, could not help feeling how melancholy and futile were all efforts to patch up, preserve, and prolong the span of frail, perishable, mortal clay, when Nature had once set her seal of growing dissolution on it. Of all men, physicians must be

alive to the melancholy truth what mer shadows we are. Our light of life, is it i dubious, shifting, and evanescent as a shi wall seen beneath the fitful glare of torch

With feelings and reflections akin to Galen sped onwards to see the old cynic growled, indeed, mechanically, as we shal anon, but whose growlings were fast d fade into a murmur—a breath—silence e

This thought alone will make us feel the since life's span is so fleeting, of letting the "dream" be as cheerful and lively as we deven if disappointment punish us, (as was with Howbiggen,) yet, let us not punish still worse, by suffering this sore to rankle universal gangrene of the mind, rendering atmosphere of our social existence noxious spiring plague.

On rolled the chariot; and to descend, at the notice of men (don't start, reader!) to rather ascend, according to Byron, who "dogs are our betters far." Well; by the the carriage trotted a dog, not of the I Hungarian species, generally used as carribut a quadruped which by its shaggy water coat we recognise as poor Gertrude's old in honest Bryan.

" Poor dumb hanimal!" would exclaim

who is also an old acquaintance of ours and the reader; "he don't thrive so well in this town, here, as he did when he beat up water-fowl in the sedges by Derwentwater side or along Buttermere. Bless you! I've seen him start many a coote, moorhen, and diver, while the Doctor, his master, was a-flinging his 'fly' hard by. O Lord! O Lord! if I don't miss the country as much as Bryan does! And though it was somewhat hard work carrying luggage from Keswick to Buttermere, across that towering pull of a hill, yet, 'dang it!' I loves the place, and often wishes to be back again."

The voice that uttered this strain of moralizing was that (as the reader has perhaps anticipated) of honest Jock, ci-devant Buttermere carrier. This forlorn worthy we remember being cast on the wide world, subsequently to his leaving the service of Hatfield under the name of Renmore, and proceeding to "Lunnun" to look for a place.

If Jock came up to London forlorn, much more so became he when he sought in vain "for a situation." He was wandering disconsolately along the street, one day, when a gentleman put his head out at the window of a carriage, and called to him by name.

Jock raised his rufine numskull, and gaped round in the direction of the voice,—when, lo and behold, he recognised in the traits of the gentleman who

ceed to his house, told him installed and liveried, as one Jock's delight was grea he thus miraculously stepp place," but he found, on Doctor's house, some old the domestics. Nor was h with the recognition of poo but a "poor dumb hanin to greet his old acquainta into a family of which he, one; "as much as if (to wor a Christian." Jock and day inseparable companions dog was unable to receive so caresses as formerly, he the to Jock, who supplied the lo Accordingly, as Jock mo riage as footman, with his l to these minor "dramatis personæ," we will proceed with the progress of the physician and our story at the same time.

The hour being now at hand of his arrival to see his patient Mr. Howbiggen, he was looked for by that careful and expectant spinster, Miss Hetty Howbiggen.

"I suppose," she said, as she poured out for her invalid brother a tumbler of orgeat,—"I suppose you have heard the report as to Doctor Esdaile?"

"No,—what?—gone 'salmon-fishing' up the Thames?—ugh!—or what?" for at the era now in view, the Thames was famous for its salmon, and we might have said with Fluellen of the river Wye, "there is goot salmons in it."

"No, not exactly this; but that he is appointed king's physician, and is to be made a baronet."

"Ugh!—umph!—every one is made a baronet now-a-days, who is in favour at court, or can lend government any money. You may buy titles of Pitt as you may buy gilt-gingerbread in a fair!—Ugh!—umph!"

"It is, begging your pardon, my good brother Tobias, a feather in his cap,—and a well-merited reward too; for he is a very estimable as well as clever person."

"May be so!" growled the cynic; "I was

always sick of his pretended 'system.' We does better, perhaps, by eccentricity and nality, or, to speak plainly, 'quackery,' any other plan,—ugh! The stupid, idle always gapes at anything in the shape of and will run crazy after the greatest imposit as the gulled dolts fancy they have found thing new. Ugh! He never cured me—that."

"And who ever could cure you? beggin pardon," replied Miss Howbiggen, in as tone of expostulation as she could, fearing tate him by a less gentle style of remons "Who could ever cure that sad fretfulness which you have so long laboured? He has thousands of others—Miss Lawton, for in amongst the rest."

"Glad of it; they are fortunate in gettin that is all,—little thanks, I take it, are due —ugh!"

"Ah, poor Laura Lawton! she received small shock from the circumstances in which name was so wound up with the story father's former 'guest,' and, as the world have it, her admirer at one time! I am stais much indebted to the assiduity and treatment. Esdaile for her recovery."

"Ugh! that may be. Meantime, your re-

to the story of that person, who it seems took us all in so, reminds me of a lesson resulting from it, which I trust you will not forget."

"A lesson?—what lesson?—am I, pray, a forger? or want lessons to keep me from the gallows?" said Miss Howbiggen, with a rather indignant toss of the head.

"Not exactly! But you may learn not to meddle or interfere with persons about whom you know nothing. To this, I may add, that it is to you this man owes his death. You set the 'hound' Quandish on the scent for him on both occasions, both at Buttermere and again in town here——".

"This is too bad !"

—"And all to gratify a vain, idle, impertinent (excuse me, it is the fact) inclination for prating, and the gratification of mere curiosity. It was you led this Quandish on the pursuit to Lord Balderton's——"

Pray, how was I to-"

—"Good Lord! good Lord! what mischief arises often from what trifling causes. Through your idle curiosity, this man, that had outwitted so many clever heads, was at length consigned to doom,—ugh! So it has been ever since the world began; the merest trifles and accidents have produced the most weighty results. Why, it was a woman's gratification of her palate that lost Paradise."....

was disagreeable, because it endeavoured, however, to qui tions of self-reproach, as she se "Good gracious! Was I, p man was found amenable to th try? Dear me! what different mentioning the circumstano gill being like Hatfield ma Could it alter, pray, the fact or not?"

The weaker and more falls was, with which the tacitly selfstrove to quiet her conscience, feel, was the force of her pla reproof. But to leave her, and a who was now in company with

"Ah! pulse a little quicke cian, as he looked at his water pulsations. This was the effective of the cian."

"Ugh, is it?" replied the cynic. "I'm glad to hear it. I had scarcely any pulse at all this morning when I got up."

"Oh! we are doing better, doubtless," observed the physician, who, though he could tolerably well guess the diseased cause of this "aggravation" of the pulse, was willing to speak as cheeringly as possible to his patient. "We are stronger and better—much!—the orgeat and the beef-tea seem to agree well with us. Nothing better for the chest than the first—nothing more strengthening for the system than the last; besides, you like them better, I think, than anything else, and—"

"Therefore, I suppose, they are the best things I could have,—he, he! Oh! I know what you have to say, my worthy Doctor. Not all your beef-tea and orgent can prolong the lease of my life another year."

"Another year?" thought the physician; "no, nor another week, perhaps,—nor even another twenty-four hours!" His words, however, to his patient were more encouraging:

"Oh dear! do not talk in this gloomy style, my dear Sir. I repeat it, we are much better to-day, singularly improved, and——"

"Oh, pooh !-stuff and nonsense!" interrupted the testy patient, who we remember always evinced immense impatience at any encouraging sentation of his condition, as if he really p being a valetudinarian and ill. "Oh, pool always talk in this way, and try to persuad he is well when he perhaps has not a week him!—this is the old story."

"My dear Mr. Howbiggen, do not exciself, I beg of you!" said the physician, and really concerned to see his testy frienhimself so much mischief by needlessly in himself. But this gentle remonstrance was avail, for the dyspeptic, and we may add man, continued to vent his characteristic and, illustrative of the "ruling passion stadeath," proceeded to grumble on—

"Pshaw! you have always declared yo cure me. You pretended to do what I alwa you was impossible,—you—you—"

But here the sick man suddenly sank this chair, exhausted by the efforts into whis spleen had forced him. Dr. Esdaile instant the bell in some alarm, and summoned Miss biggen once again to the side of her brother chair, recommending he should be instant moved to bed, and saying he could, he feared no avail in recruiting exhausted nature, than by the remedies he had already presented.

After having seen his patient removed to his bed-room, and begging Miss Howbiggen to dispatch a message to him instantly, in case any more serious crisis should arrive, the Doctor took his leave, not holding out much hope to her of her brother's recovery.

"He sleeps now," said the physician, in a subdued tone. "Should anything occur to increase your alarm, I shall be at Lord Balderton's; send for me there; I will lose no time in coming to you."

So saying, the physician took his leave, and at the due period repaired to Lord Balderton's to dinner, where Mr. and Miss Lawton were to be guests. They and the rest of the party had arrived, with the exception of Miss Howbiggen, who, as we have seen, was more painfully employed than in dining out,—when the attention of all was called to the announcement by the servant into the drawing-room, of "Sir Richard Esdaile."

In fact, the patent for conferring the "degree of a baronet to himself and the heirs male of," &c. had been that day graciously granted to the estimable no less than fortunate physician; and sincere and universal were the congratulations offered him by the group whom he now met.

By none were they more heartily expressed than

ton expressed herself much that her cousin Miss Howb the party was in consequence sion.

"Nay," said Sir Richard minute to be summoned to poor cynical friend, for what dyspepsia, I always cherished spect and esteem. He often diatribes, from the mere afforded him to do so, rather

from us, we will look lenient!

So spoke the benevolent p
withdrawal of the ladies, the co
by Lord Balderton's congrat
on having got his bill thro
improving the line of road a

tract. His lordship had "tal

uncharitable feeling. On the

provement which has 'germinated' forth with such 'radical' benefits, and such 'radiant and fructifying' results."

Sir Richard could hardly forbear a smile at the amusing jumble of metaphor that characterized, as usual, his lordship's "peculiar" style, as he observed, looking as grave as he could—

"Yes, indeed, my Lord, the neighbourhood of Borrodaile and Keswick is really seriously indebted to our friend Mr. Lawton's efforts at improving the lines of communication. We were afraid at one time," he continued, exhibiting a little of his favourite inclination to banter, "that he would have been so indefatigable as to 'improve' away all the beauties of the route; but he has, in the present instance, agreeably surprised us, and improved away the defects."

"On my word, Sir Richard, you pay me a compliment!" said the lord of Blacktarn, sipping his claret. "Ahem!—ay! I well remember mentioning, amongst other projected improvements, this plan of mine for improving the Borrodaile route to that singular character—Hatfield!"

"God bless me!" exclaimed his metaphorical lordship,—"singular character, indeed! You may well say so. To think that in the breast of a disguised criminal should 'lurk' and 'well forth' the superior powers that, as the private secretary of a

And here Lord Balderton's further awakened by learnin Woodsland,—for it was himsel that it was no other than the who had performed the part of venerable stranger at Butterme Quaker lastly at Ravenglass,—that of the confidential secretar

"Ay; but you should have a in the 'part' of Colonel Renmon perfection," said Sir Richard true that ars est celare artem."

"Ah!" replied his lordship ness, "it is really a matter of the interests of society that h more properly conglomerated in more immaculate exercise."

Balderdash here reached its Lawton's solemn physiognomy ship, a "vivid drawback" on the conversation for this brief interval. Woodsland turned to a poetical friend sitting next him, and remarked—

"I declare I never had a more agreeable ten minutes' conversation with any one than with the seeming old Mr. Jackson, by the side of Windermere. You had just left us, I remember, to proceed to town about the publication of your new poem; and really, with regard to this subject, I may congratulate you on having received the approbation which is your desert, considering how bitter and malignant is the vein of criticism in these times. I admire the poem very much; the action is vivid and varied, and the colouring highly poetical—nay, grand."

"You speak with the partiality and kindness of a friend and brother writer," replied Routhmore; for it was himself. "Alas! I know myself, and feel that, from the habits of solitude I have been accustomed to throughout the earlier stage of manhood, I have indulged more in pursuing images that my reading supplied, or my fancy conjured up, than studied the workings of the human heart, and the more true and faithful pictures of life. But to return to the period when this Jackson—"

But here the reminiscences of the brother bards were broken off by the rising of the rest of the circle, as there was now a general move wards the drawing-room, to rejoin the la

"A delightful improvement," obser Lawton to Lady Balderton, "this glass-ding into the conservatory,—delightful! the drawing-room a perfect paradise. I dear, I don't think we have any gern Blacktarn of so large a size as that;" a rected her attention to one in particular; I was engaged in conversation with Sir Ridaile, and answered merely by a smile a assent to the appeal to her.

Lady Balderton replied-

"Yes, indeed; the alteration you obsders the room more cheerful—especially or candle light, as now. But what are you ing so particularly?"

"I have now made a discovery;" and to the two poets who were standing on the coof Lady Balderton, conversing with her miring the gaiety and bloom of the conser-"I perceive now why it is you poets are to the epithet, 'blue hills.'"

"Indeed!" replied Woodsland, smiling colouring is perhaps only in fancy; it may illusion, nothing more."

"I beg your pardon," replied the expe

philosopher, solemnly; "it is the effect of light. But only see how little things may be brought to prove and illustrate the loftiest and grandest phenomena? I was looking, for instance, at those dark green leaves under the lamp, and lo and behold! they wore a tint perfectly cerulean—a lovely azure. It is the effect (ahem!) of a combination of the yellow light of the lamp with the green tint of the leaf:—so the hills that you call blue wear that appearance under the golden lustre of the mighty lamp of day, as it blends and harmonizes with the green. The effect of light, as influencing colour, is thus witnessed (ahem!) in the petty instance before us, as plainly and satisfactorily, (ahem!) as in the grander instance of your 'blue hills.'"

"Upon my word, very philosophical and clever!" observed Sir Richard, who had advanced to the spot, on seeing his worthy Blacktarn friend descanting with such apparent gravity and interest on the favourite theme of what he was pleased to call experimental philosophy.

"Not only has Mr. Lawton spoken philosophically, but poetically, too," observed Routhmore. "Nay, he has justified us poets in the use of an epithet which was adopted without much consideration of the 'philosophical' reasons for its propriety."

He smiled as he spoke, and as though irony tinctured his remark, at the expense lover of improvement and experiment.

A smile, possibly, played upon the counter of all present, with the same characteristic; was nothing in comparison to the smile of the which defied all irony of the philosopher hand he was about to descant further on the bound of Lady Balderton's conservatory, when a was thrown over the circle by the entrandomestic with a note for Sir Richard, the confidence with a note for Sir Richard, the confidence with a made known, and then instantly drew. His immediate attendance was necessary the bed-side of Mr. Howbiggen; and this must accompany the physician on his mela commission.

Softly he entered the dying man's room. Howbiggen was supporting his head in her as he feebly drew the breath that was fast fact ever. The hue of death was on his brow: was fallen: his eye without speculation or ration of objects. He knew not the physician approached. He had been delirious at the Sir Richard was sent for, and still muttere herent sentences, as misty dreams vaguely before the dying sense. "Lost—thous minister—Give me back—give me—"

They waited to hear what further syllable should escape; but though the lips seemed in act to enunciate, the voice was waited for in vain. The cynic's soul had fled while his lips murmured, to the last moment of life, their morbid tale of disappointed views.

It was the "phantom" of the self-punished man that now was supported in the arms of her who had long been the kind companion of his distempered day, and had shewn, whatever her foibles and vanities might be, much forbearance and sisterly regard for the late fretful and sick-minded being, whose better qualities we have already done justice to, in the kind words which our friend Sir Richard Esdaile expressed of him at Lord Balderton's.

To draw a veil, then, over the grim picture of death, no less than the imperfections of the deceased, we will proceed to gratify at once the reader's curiosity to learn how far the "on-dits" relative to the surmised nuptials of Sir Richard and Miss Lawton were right or otherwise.

In a word, they were on the present occasion happily verified, by this interesting event taking place, at Mr. Lawton's residence in town, at no very great distance of time from that just referred to; after which event he returned to Blacktarn, which was now, however, become a perfect solitude to him since it was deprived of the presence of Laura, of whom he was devotedly fond. He therefo an earnest request to his son-in-law to n his mind to quit London, and take up hi entirely at Blacktarn. He added a strong mendation in the postscript, which was—

"You have forgotten to throw a fly time, and I am sure will not be sorry to bri hand in again; for the meers and brooks as than ever of char—the finest you can in And the improvements at Blacktarn are (immense! So pray make up your mind to down with Laura at as early an opportunity can fix."

Such was the postscript to the worthy M ton's letter: nor did it want an advocate its suit in Laura.

In a word, as soon as Sir Richard was ab a good grace and due respect to his royal to give up his "very successful and hon career" in town, he acquiesced in the wi Mr. Lawton and Lady Esdaile. Nor did pent his step, for he went with the gracio mission and kind remembrances of royalt when he had left the din, and moil, and I of the great Babylon (and of the world no hind him, to meet the eloquent joy of natu the peaceful murmur of his favourite brooks, truly happy. Happier yet was he, when

met by the smile of Laura, as he recognised in her a partner in the content and cheerfulness of heart he experienced.

Jock really grinned with so sincere a satisfaction at the first intimation, on the part of his master, of his intended return to their native wilds, that the poor fellow's whole face was but one uncouth grin—a "stereotyped" grimace, that it was amusing no less than "delightful" to behold!

Bryan, too, was conscious of a bustle and stir, and barked and ran about, partaking of the universal excitement; but he barked with a true consciousness of the cause of pleasure, when he once again found himself trotting by the side of his master, along the sedgy banks of meer and streamlet, starting the stray bittern from her nest, or darting joyously into the flood, after coote or mallard, that skimmed the plashed wave with eager cry and outstretched throat to avoid him.

CHAPTER 3

"Her madness was a beam of light, Which dawned through the rent so Which might not be withstood."

"This is the fairest villa Ran on the green sward. Nothing But smacks of something greater th Too noble for this place!"

THERE are passages in our occupy us for a brief period, en and which took place previous which our preceding chapter etion of these passages we acco selves, in the fulfilment of our

Some months, then, had ela lancholy occurrences had tal It is with melancholy interest that we retrace the spot where we meet them, since it was that where Gertrude first shone on us in her beauty. We can picture her as she stood,—her gladsome, her guileless heart smiling through her unclouded brow; the light of love shedding a yet brighter lustre, to augment that in which her beauty had already enshrined her. But now, how altered!

If the haunts of Loch Katrine and the Trossachs, at a later period, brought so many votaries to the scene where the spirit of the "Lake Lady" presided, while the world bowed before the spell of the wizard-minstrel that summoned it there,—not less, in proportion, was its desire manifested, though blent with feelings of a more painful curiosity, to visit the wild haunts of Buttermere.

Many a foot sought to track the scenes where the "Beauty of Buttermere" had trod a path of so much bitter interest. That anxiety to catch a glimpse of "the Beauty," to which we have at an earlier period of our humble memorial borne witness, was now indeed augmented,—and from how unhappy a cause! The "Beauty of Buttermere" and her inauspicious fate were in every mouth.

The party of persons already mentioned were engaged in conversation on the all-engrossing topic, as they stood on the height looking towards the

The very wildness of the courcharm of its beauty; and this companied by the graceful newhich floated loosely round than earthly lightness, as it them to be, in their mingled tion. It seemed as if some frand lovely haunt around them upon their sight. The soft of from the waters of the meer, priant golden locks, that floate

The vision-like illusion whether presented, was aided be delicate paleness of the brow; the form, as it floated past, the evanescence of a vision's fad radiance of that pure pale he cheek too,—how it touched the

"A heavenly being, in truth!" said a young man, eminent for his distinguished person and handsome features, addressing the lady next him: it was Horace Velmont, commonly called the "handsome Horace." "I never saw a more charming object," he continued, "or a lovelier countenance—unless it were your Grace's!"

"Good Heavens! is it possible that this can be the face of the once blooming and cheerful 'Maid of Buttermere?" exclaimed the Duchess, for it was indeed her Grace of Devonshire, who had fulfilled her promise of once again coming to see Gertrude. "Poor, beautiful girl! I remember saying to her how I hoped, the next time I saw her, to find her happier! Poor girl!—'the next time!' How she is altered!"

"What, then,—is this the Beauty herself? I suspected as much!" replied Velmont. "I will speak to her; for, see! she now stands looking at us from the hill brow, and whether she is some bright Essence of another world, some nymph orspirit of these haunts, or the fair being we take her for, she seems as if she would be addressed; and as we are taught in Hamlet that the whole spiritual conclave expects to be accosted or 'conjured' first, before it will speak, I will e'en address her!"

So saying, he approached the beautiful figure,



but stood gazing on the spea wrapped in some meditation or haply carried away on the ciation, which his presence on in her mind. At length she a hysterical laugh, which was a of ignorance or vacant folly the of mind, which could not be cernment of the party, couple neglect of her attire, and the v in her countenance.

"Good Heavens! she is or marked the Duchess, in a lowe tive of her concern. "Let us to speak."

With another hysterical lat proceeded to reply to Velmon ing out the way from the det were, to the village,—talking he said to me when we first met; and he was much such another as you," she continued, in an incoherent manner, and with a stare of mingled pleasure and surprise, as she regarded fixedly the traits of the young and handsome Velmont; "but his hair," she said, looking again, "was a shade darker than yours, and his voice had more music—but speak again, and I shall know better!" and she paused, as if waiting to hear him speak.

The tears came into the eyes of the Duchess, and the ladies with her. In fact, it was all that Velmont even could do, as he gazed on this wreck of once cheerful loveliness, to maintain a voice of firmness, as he said, "You will go with us, perhaps, to the village, and conduct us yourself? Will you accompany me?"

"You—you! no, you are not he!" she continued, after a pause. "Do you think I cannot tell? I could tell him from a thousand! I could always tell his voice—how could I do otherwise? (and she laughed wildly,) for my heart was tuned to it. It used to seem, as he spoke, as if my own soul found expression in his language; yes, yes!" and here for a while she turned her eyes away from Velmont's face, and seemed lost in her dream; when, suddenly turning to him again, she exclaimed, "No, you are not he; I thought you were at first, for I fancy sometimes I see him, and

yet I know he is gone!—know he is g repeated, as she fixed her eyes on the gro her head drooped, and relapsing deeply musing fit, she stood motionless as so triumph of the sculptor's art."

"Poor lovely creature!" exclaimed her thoughts are running on dear yet membrances!"

"How exquisitely beautiful she is,"
Duchess, regarding her through the t
dimmed her eyes. "I wonder whether s
remember me were I to address her;—th
perhaps as well I should not speak to h
circumstance of my acquaintance with h
could be rendered sensible of it) might
crease her pain."

"What,—as to the reprieve?" obsermont; but scarcely had the words esclips, but the lovely object of their commstarted from her dream, and, looked hastil as if she had caught the import of Velmmark, and snatching from her bosom a paper, hurried onwards as she cried—

"It is here! Don't stop me; I shallate!"

And on Velmont's following her with quest to let him look at the paper, and her but a moment longer, she only replie same incoherent and anxious words, as she hurried eagerly onward, and had speedily vanished from the sight of the party, vision-like, as she had arisen on it.

"I must not lose sight of her yet!" exclaimed Velmont. " Never in my life was I sensible of so painful a subject of interest. She is beautiful to a marvel, despite the effects of her suffering. What she must have been when in the bloom of health and gaiety of heart I can well imagine; but I should scarcely deem it possible to meet any human creature of more beauty than I have found in her, as she now is. I doubt whether the laughing bloom of health would touch the heart so much, or appear more really lovely, than the tenderness of sorrow, the expression of sweet yet sad remembrances, that is now the soul of her countenance! Her features, her complexion, her hair-they are all loveliness! It is scarcely possible she could (at least in my estimation) be more an object of admiration or interest. Let us follow on her track, if but to come up with her for a moment more before we quit Buttermere."

"Indeed, she may well win your heart, Horace, for she has won the hearts of all here!" replied the Duchess, as she proceeded, with the rest of the party, along the track where Gertrude had vanished from them.

spot where Gertrude's form its flight, and the party were nity of coming up with her. It was a naked space of

paused, and which bore mark the site of some habitation; mains of rafters, of shattered been burnt to the ground.

tared wall, bore evident tes " A fit home for him !" si laugh of exultation,-"a fit h pitiless betrayer! Let him and desolation !" and as she sp wore a flush of indignation wild loveliness of its expressipiece of burnt wood, as she de of the ruin, waving it, as thoug firing the building. " Av. bu

head !- you may burn it! if nings of heaven itself will see While the party were yet engaged in painful conjectures as to the cause of her present excitement, and as Velmont, seeing her exhaustion, was about to approach in order to offer her support, their attention was suddenly turned in an opposite direction.

They were made sensible of the cries of an elderly and respectable looking female, who hastened up to the spot, wringing her hands and exclaiming, "My daughter! my poor, poor child—where have you wandered to?" But perceiving the presence of the party near the spot, she ceased her cries, while she addressed a hasty excuse.

"Pardon me, ladies, I am her mother—pardon me!" and hastening up to her child, she spoke to her through her tears, begging her, with much kindness, (a kindness taught by the suffering she now deplored,) to return home with her.

Nor was her endeavour without success; while Velmont and those with him would willingly have made inquiries as to the reason of that which had just excited in them so much painful surprise. But they felt that the present was not precisely the occasion to gratify their melancholy curiosity, nor the parent indeed, the person that delicacy would permit them to question concerning the suffering of her child, however much their sympathies



Howbiggens had lately take The different equipages, to party were drawn up near th As they were pursuing t

As they were pursuing t side, they met a person wh benign aspect inspired at on in those who contemplated made them wish to know him pleasure already.

"We will inquire of this Duchess, "for an explanatio cacy deterred us from asking haps he is a resident near the to inform us."

Velmont accordingly, bow

question, related what had pressions of their surprise as cumstances. "She was at le speaking of the heauteons ar

"Yes," replied the person to whom they addressed themselves; "her mother is, I am happy to say, making up, by due kindness and attention, for a good deal of mistaken severity with which she treated poor Gertrude some time ago. In fact, she is herself an object of compassion, for the constant self-accusation with which she visits herself on that account. The fact is, she erred more through want of discernment than any natural unkindness of disposition; but a low tartuffe, a pretended religious character, having gained an ascendency over her mind, prevailed much with her in urging his suit to her daughter; which being repelled by Gertrude, brought on her the displeasure of her parent. The sympathy of the people shewed itself bitterly on the side of Gertrude, and against the mock-preacher, when his real character became known. It was anything but that which he had deceived them and Gertrude's weak parent into believing. In fact, you are all aware how the unfortunate Hatfield was betrayed by the man he had formerly so much befriended."

"And was this mock-preacher the person?" interrupted Velmont. "I wonder not at the unhappy girl manifesting the sense of injury which she did."

"He was, and you will consequently be little

"It is indeed little matter people burned the building," "But was there not some having lost his life from the populace at Carlisle?"

"Whether he lost his life say; certain it is he disappear ner shortly after that manifesting of him, as being the personate girl you have lately see also who possessed her affect of this Quandish, as he called to this occurrence, no one one can say with any certalikely to know, it is a singular man, well known in this ne whole country round."

" Is it the person they call Duchess, calling to mind the verted to that period, and entered into a conversation with her informant, relative to the various past occurrences, in connexion with the singular story of Hatfield and the lovely being whose fatal affection for him had involved her in so distressful a doom.

At length having arrived at the spot where the carriages were drawn up, the Duchess, accompanied by the rest of the party, took her leave of her informant, with the acknowledgments of herself and Velmont. She did not forget at the same time to express, with her characteristic kindness of heart, the regret she felt at being unable to alleviate the condition of the hapless 'Beauty of Buttermere,' in meeting whom their curiosity had been so painfully gratified.

"Perhaps," replied their informant, as he withdrew, "a melancholy interest has been added in seeing her as you have. She is as some once cherished and lovely flower now run wild, and wandering over the ruin of that abode where she had been cultured and cherished. That wild flower is not more beautiful in its desolation, than the lonely and lovely human-flower that now thus mournfully decorates these haunts."

So saying, he withdrew, while Velmont remarked of him-

haunts classic ground." "Doubtless he must be so! "I knew not whether most lence of heart, as he related on which our conversation imagery with which at times h rated the commonest subjects "Certainly an interesting would make a delightful Cic region!" remarked Velmont. "Indeed, the poetry and b require some spirit kindred to interpret them aright. It is to inspire poetry and barmony most discordant spirits; but st however much he may feel heart, that is able to give a it. This is the triumph of we have witnessed in the

Nor was the fair speaker mistaken. It was indeed the bard and philosopher himself, with whom they had fallen in. He was, when he met them, proceeding, as was his usual custom, to the village, to inquire after the ill-fated maiden of Buttermere, and offer, with his characteristic benevolence, what consolation he might to her unhappy parent.

Different indeed was the aspect now presented by the premises of the once neat and pretty little hostelrie, where it has been our lot so often to invite the reader.

He would scarcely recognise in those untrimmed turf-borders,—those unweeded walks,—that rough unmown surface of the lawn,—those rambling and unpruned tendrils of shrub and flower,—the once graceful and chastely decorated garden that erewhile witnessed the care of Gertrude. As everything was neglect and desolation without, so all was mournfulness and gloom within.

And now we have discharged our duty to the reader, in tracing all that his curiosity may demand, relative to the different persons of our story, with one exception. He will readily guess this is spoken with reference to the ancient mariner, who, independently of the singular characteristics that render him a subject of interest in himself, demands yet



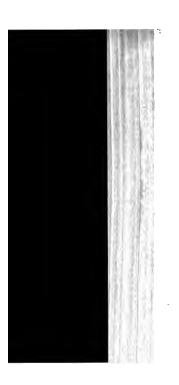
CHAPTER XIX.

"Heav'n rest her soul! Round the lake light music stole, And her shade was seen to glide, Beauteous o'er the fatal tide."

MOORE.

Where the blue lightnings are writhing round those gaunt forest trunks, and the leaves dance in weird mazes at their base—where the belated rustic hears unearthly sounds in the moaning wintry blast, and sees phantoms in every white gleam through the forest vista, and in every pallid trunk clad in its hoary moss—an aged step is seen to pause, an aged silvery brow is seen to gaze. And the dim light, as it shews the countenance, reveals there the different passions too, with which he gazes.

Ghastly was the brow, and pale with the workings of passion, in its alternate vicissitudes of scorn and of regret,—of fearful triumph and bitter commiseration,—as his breast was variously swayed by the



will call to mind as that whe remarks upon the skeleton, escape towards the sea-coast.

We remember the strain smile was not of the heart, attempted to hush the dre whispered within him, as he testimony of vindicated justistill,—that skeleton—grinning lee, as it danced amid the bl the funereal minstrelsy of the clank of its own iron win chains.

That grim spectacle had relics of the very being it ha on, in dreary omen of his im

[•] The frightful barbarism of "ha confined to instances of murder, eve which we here speak. Well may a

"Ah! that was an ill jest you made," said the old man, as he stood looking with feelings of regret and compassion on the skeleton of Hatfield. It seemed to his fancy to commune with him, face to face, as the gaunt sockets of the skeleton glared fixedly on the brow of the ancient mariner.

He gazed, nothing appalled, on that fearful effigy of death;—horror seemed familiar to him, and he spoke as if to a thing of life and perception, as he continued, in a strain of regretful remonstrance—

"That was an ill jest you made when you said, when last here, to the bones that rock hard by, that your own might one day be their partner where they dance 'mid those weird-waving boughs!"

The skeleton brow bent as the wind swayed it, as though in approval of the old man's remonstrance. The mariner paused as he gazed on it, while mournfully and slowly he shook his grey locks, following the train of painful remembrances.

After awhile, he walked past the fearful trunk, and his countenance now lost its aspect of sorrow, and compassionate remorse, in the vicissitude of sterner feeling of which he was now made sensible. Scorn, and the bitterness of mingled hate and contempt, nor less the fell triumph of conscious

sition, it faces the whitening be like his, however, is it the fo the hand of justice. It had was, none knew by whose pered, indeed, "the wizars could tell."

But none cared to question stance;—testimony there we that of which he might possil

With scornful lip, and ind he turned his upward glance he accents, as withering as the round—as withering as the of the lightning-bolt that seared

"Whiten thou there!—v thy deserts,—thou foul instr malign battener on the lif benefactor! Unsparing hard breath was his,—whiten tho swayed the sentence that condemned him. Exult (and didst thou not erewhile?) that thou hadst glutted thee in his life-blood? Ha, ha!" he continued, with a scornful laugh and withering glance of reproach—" I bid thee exult!—long and painfully didst thou seek him—lo, thou hast found him!—It is meet thou shouldst thus keep him company!—ha, ha!—Wither thou there—wither, wither!"

So saying, the weird mariner turned him with loathing from the object of his execration, and, casting again one mournful and compassionate glance on the relics of his favourite "fated son," as he had been used to call him, took his way slowly, and wrapt in musings solemn and sorrowful, from the spot.

Should any eye have marked him there—(all familiar as he was with the dead, and with the storm)—he seemed as though a kindred spirit among the phantoms with which the country-superstitions peopled that drear haunt. The rude dwellers round the forest border would watch Mike's lonely visitation of its recesses, and pause on the brink—for none would venture to follow him to the scene of his fearful communings. They would stay their footsteps without, as if pausing on the margin of a magic-circle, within which the wizard

as now his receding form is depths of the forest mazes?

There is a spot on the seawhere they will shew you, reahut, sheltered beneath the clupon the watery waste.

There the weird mariner has
It is the same rude asylum to
had been conveyed, after the
flight of which she had been
cell where we have erewhile a
the crags of Buttermere, is a
fox makes its lair there, and th
bat flits out at its dark cavern
hues of twilight shadow the clit

The foxglove, with its ran deadly nightshade, interweave brier, to veil the entrance; ye it out still, as once the abode of membrance of its weird dweller, whose communion with Spirits was currently believed by the credulous rustics.

Never since the hour when old Mike had taken his way from Carlisle, where last we met him; never since its gloomy keep had faded in the distance from his view, had he resought his wonted cavern-abode at Buttermere.

The old man's goodness of heart, and regrets for the doom of him in whose fortunes we have witnessed him taking so deep an interest, permitted him no longer to dwell contentedly at a spot that was fraught with the constant recollections of one who from childhood had been beloved by him; yet the kindly feelings that he cherished, scarcely less, for Gertrude, would call his step, at due periods, to wander forth to Buttermere, and ask after her health.

With this exception, the weird form of old Mike was never seen pacing along the brow that over-looks the meer, or waking the gaze of the villagers as he "glode" (in old ballad phrase) through the hamlet.

Those who would seek him—if but to ask one of the many strange and stirring tales with which his memories of the past were fraught—must look for him now in the lone hut at Ravenglass, hard by

For such, again, is the w which their superstitions in who haply never prayed her prayer of propitiation, as they his ominous threshold. Long would they linger, to

ing on the old man's records and gazing, pale with awe, or wasted yet venerable brow. It of the Maiden of Buttermere with the destinies of the behim, engaged the memories of has the tear been awakened fras, swayed with ruth, they record, and yielded up their it

On the last occasion that haunts of Buttermere, to lo seared flower of beauty which so low, this was the tale whi as the rude village informan had seen her, for everywhere had she looked along the track where it had been Gertrude's wont to range, yet had found her not. Distraught though her wanderings had been, never had she failed to return home. Where was she now?

"Everywhere we sought; far as you see the venerable yew of Lorton, over every spot her foot had loved to trace! We hied us to the deserted abode where the good curate had ever taught her to seek a home — where now, in lifelessness, vacancy, and silence, the closed windows glared like dead men's eyes—where the roses straggled wild over the garden—the roses from which she would at times weave her a wreath, and set it fantastically on her head—ay! this would she do, while she paced restlessly up and down, and called for those whom she ought to meet there, and received no answer, till, frighted by the silence and the solitude, she would fly the spot as eagerly as she had sought it.

"Yes! everywhere we searched for her, along her favourite height of Melbreak too, and by the meer-side. Ay, it was there we found the wild rosewreath which that very day she had twined round her hair. We took it up, but did not shew it her mother, as we feared to tell her what we thought.

"Our fear was that the poor lovely thing's mischance had found her a grave in the meer!-

"We met one, indeed, who had come down the slope to his custom, he added) at the shour, on the meer, he fancied light on the water, more than flash of its starlit waves when ples them. Yet he was not that it was any figure in white to sink in the waters. Poor C white, and we should have the self whom he must have seen;

"It was the kind-hearted me her so much care, and was as a know what had become of her beloved, too, by all of us, and village round,—it was Mr. Go aided us in our search; but Long was it, too, before we con ler's Rest' again; there is not a voice to be heard scarcely, but the bittern's (it may be) as its cry sounds from the little brook; and the garden—it is all run to waste now, and the walks are overrun with weeds and straggling shrubs;—and, oh, it is a long time since we had anything like a merry bout at skittles or bowls on the green, that used to be kept so smooth and fair when poor dear Gertrude used to look after things. All, all is sadly changed now."

And here the rude narrative would break off, and the speaker be lost in sorrowful recollections of the happier past, so painfully now contrasted with the vacancy, gloom, and desertion of the present, when the forms he loved have parted, and have left the scenes where they moved cold as the grave that hides them!

So Mike told the tale; and many are the wild legends and chaunts of rustic verse to which it gave birth. You may yet hear the poor vagrant minstrels of the north chaunt aloud to the admiring Cumbrian swains the theme, "how the Beauty of Buttermere was wondrously lost to sight."

And now night wraps in its calm dream the maze. The meer-depths—their moss and blossom-chequered banks—the hill brows above—the scattered cottages around, are not more harmonized in the silvery starlight that tints them far and wide, than they are hallowed at this hour by

the fatal steep that overhan
neath the shadows of which
met her doom.

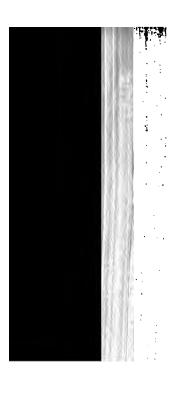
Ever, as the gorgeous glo
fainter over those waters,
emerges clearer from out the
night dews have spread over a
moss, along the mountain's
seen hastening to fold his flo
hies him to regain the confin
cheer away, in the sounds of l
of his fire-side, the shadows
his breast, and chilled his ru

Full often has he sped
along that dim and sadly

along that dim and sadly mused on the fate of Gertri ing fearful and side-long glake, he has seen, with the ey soft vision floating over the vishe sleeps.



APPENDIX.



No. I.

The following characteristic "dream" is subjoined here as illustrative of the argument in Chapter VII. of the first volume, although the story itself does not represent it as introduced until a later stage.

THE FAIRY FUTURE;

OR.

MOTHER EARTH IN A NEW DRESS:

A " Psychological Thesis." *

AFTER the dismal sleep of untold time,

Earth rais'd her head, the waste immane to see

Of floods that gulf'd her puny shell of slime,

As one poor moment 'neath Eternity.

With dazzled ken she saw, 'mid joy and pain,

The beam, far slant, come glimm'ring o'er the deep;

And from long time, she knew the light again,

That rous'd once more her Inanition's sleep!

* The reader need scarcely be apprised that the peculiar term adopted here is characteristic of the person from whom the lines that follow are supposed to emanate. Our "Psychologist" proposes to illustrate the idea of a new world, or "earthstratum," according to the Cuverian system of its revolutions; in each successive phase of which it has exhibited, and will exhibit, (as is hence reasonable to suppose,) an improved nature, essence, and



That pent her heaving breast a And free, more free, from out the Respired she! shook her dew-Her revel was as slave's, the chai That long his pang hath vainly Nor yet, alone, her watery bond But lo! she beam'd, new dight And calling back what in old tin Gaz'd she with wonder on her Admir'd her smiling bound's tran From all that late so dank and For not alone was fairer garlande Her brow, with rarer plants, a But, like a sea of light, her radia All silvery shone beneath those Seem'd from that stern Submersic A Being of new purity! a rare Essence throughout her frame, w But promised to her joy an ası Nor baffled yet her hope: for as the ray
Kindled with vital warmth that silvery strand,
The foster'd seeds* of human, chaster clay,
Bloom'd in bright births, as 'neath a fairy wand!
Glad into being sprang a beauteous race,
Man-like in form and guise, but sham'd by none
Of those gross attributes that man debase—
Bate his high vaunt, and boasted "heav'n-born" tone.
These seem'd divine indeed! no gross appeal
Strove through the Senses! For what food lack'd
they

To whom the gales their sweetest banquet deal?
Such the rare structure of their purer clay!
Organs were theirs, less complicate than ours,
And lacking springs, that curious-plann'd howe'er,
Yet lower man—the beast—that craves, devours,
Or lust-inflamed, foregoes high Reason's care.
These knew distinction none of Sex: they seem'd
A beauteous confraternity of Spirits,
That in the rapture of their being dream'd
Of nothing that or gross or vile inherits!
If man be vile, his "structure" orders this;
Not so with this new race! It seem'd but form'd
For radiant perpetuity of bliss,
By no one dark assault of Passion storm'd!

The idea here seems to illustrate the old Oriental belief, that "human nature" was the birth of that saline chemia left by the receding of the waters at the creation of the world. Avicenna goes so far as to say that this is corroborated by the "saline" in our composition; in fact, the Arabian sage describes men, according to this hypothesis, as plants sprung from "brine-seeds."



The chaste seeds of the Tenovale In this New Revolution of her Gave not, as erst, to light the mo Of savage beast or reptile pros As man was form'd not now—a No doom of grim destruction, Reign'd through distract Creation Whose sov'reign law gloats ay No brute-tribe ranged earth's ma Nought that enhanc'd her che-Happy in One blest race, she litt Her stores for aught to sully o And her sons walk'd in glad Secu Thro' paths, whose garland's r Was the choice flow'r "Contentn In chaste luxuriance joying wi-Ambition's treach'rous wreath—i BLISS was their World, amid Whose crystalline* translucence,

Rose-tinted, blush'd 'neath sun

The germ as well of man's as plant's creation

Bloom'd free from taint of contact gross! . . I ne'er

Have sunn'd me in that golden dream's ovation,

But blam'd my Fancy that it mock'd so fair!—

But blam'd the restless, fond, ambitious Thought,

That, panting still for all—new, dread, or rare,—

Snatch'd the bright glimpse that but my sorrow wrought,

Hurl'd from that fairy heaven, to life that frown'd



THE three following stanzes, also che of the speculations at pages 48 and subjoined here rather than in the tex upon the narrative.

MEASURE we Fame's fair scollimitable—flood, vale, wood Successive stretch'd as far as ke In truth, as seeming, spread its So vast? or magnify we, fond, Turn to yon star-illumin'd gale Of Worlds on Worlds. E it drown'd!

Thus, pictur'd vast, lures Fam-Though but a drop, 'mid streams Sea. To grace th' "Hereafter's" illusory spell?
Think! echo though thy praise the Shadowy Coast,
Yet, whelm'd 'mid myriad rival boasts its swell—
Names voiced from Worlds on Worlds, Fame's countless host—

How sinks a shadow's shade, the once great-seeming boast!

Yes, such their worth, Fame's future triumphs beam!

Such, here, their pigmy price, Earth's colours fly!

Is it for this—a speck, a shade, a dream,

Man throbs so ardent, toils so fretfully?

Is it for this, Thought's struggle, Envy's sigh,

Too much infect him, sapping peace and bliss,

Marring blest bonds that twine the Social tie,

As on his vain emprise he bends, to miss

Life's sympathetic stores, and concourse bland—for

This!

T. C. Savill, Printer, 107, St. Martin's Lane.





